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AUSTRALIAN AND BRITISH SOCCER WEEKLY

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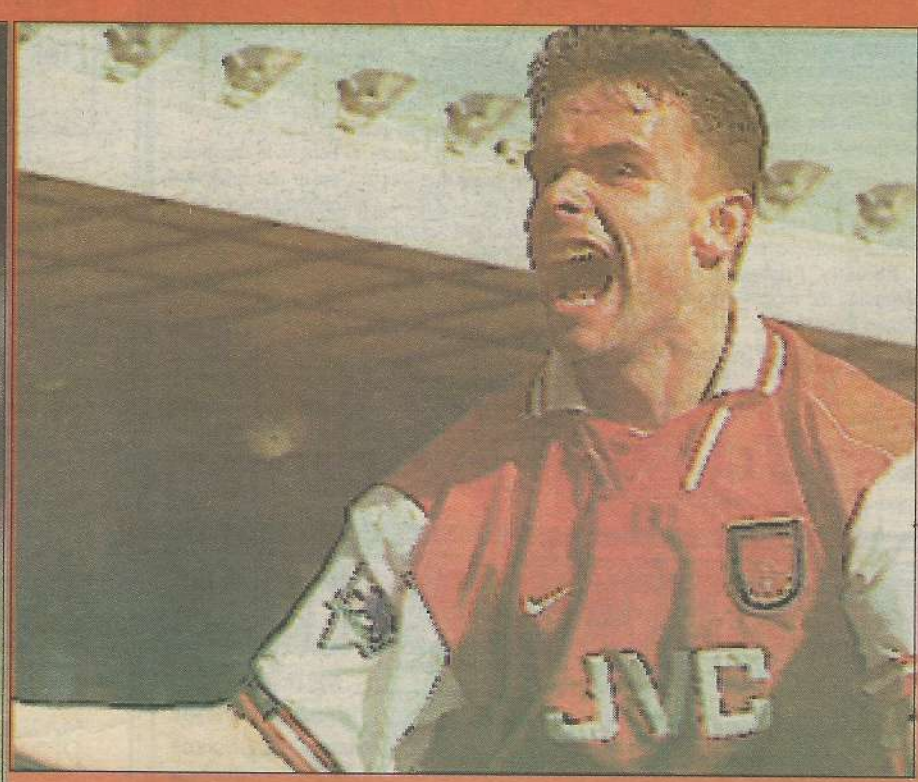
WHAT A WEEKEND!



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- Soccer West Coast hosts Hammers star Stan Lazaridis
- Hearts' triumph
- Matic leaves Marconi
- Les Murray on Real v Juve
- World Cup Group previews

and heaps more in your 32 page ABSW

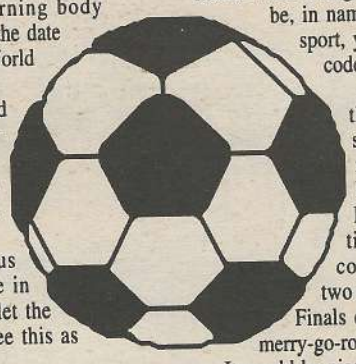
COMMENT

WORLD CUP 2010?

Australia want to host the World Cup in 2010 but can it honestly be believed at this stage that it is a feasible proposition?

Before we can properly address this question, we have to look at the probability factor, the 'pros and cons' if you like.

The official line is that Soccer Australia will seek to host the finals in 2006, but only if Australia has a realistic chance of winning and, if not, the governing body would look to 2010 as the date to host our first ever World Cup extravaganza.



David Hill has stated that: "Australia has very strong credentials in being serious contenders to host a World Cup."

Much as many of us would love to believe in the dream, most who let the head rule the heart, see this as just that — a dream!

Soccer Australia would be seeking bids for partnerships involving Melbourne Major Events, and the participating state and federal governments.

Recently, Brisbane had the honour of upgrading the soccer venue for the Olympic Games tournament to be held by Sydney in the year 2000. Money has been made available to do this, but even in this it will not be soccer that proves to be the real benefactor.

The Olympic Games hosts the largest soccer tournament after the World Cup. That taken as granted, the committee that has put money forward for upgrading the arenas to be used, opted for the Gabba, not Suncorp Stadium, where the Brisbane Strikers play their home matches.

In this scenario, it would be fair to say that Cricket and Aussie Rules will benefit from the money spent, NOT soccer.

If we then look into the future — taking into account the present financial climate soccer finds itself in — can we not then predict, with some certainty, that soccer again will be placed at the bottom of the ladder even though the cash spent would be, in name at least, used for our sport, yet really assisting other codes.

In 12 years time, when this beautiful dream is supposed to become reality, Australia could have a professional league, could have full-time professional clubs, could have qualified for two consecutive World Cup Finals or could be on the same merry-go-round as now.

It would be nice to believe in the dream, to have the World Cup in our backyard. Sadly, we must dismiss the idea as being 'fanciful' at this time, though it would be wonderful to be proven wrong.

Soccer Australia will also be bidding to host the Confederations Cup in 2001. If we manage to obtain this tournament and show the world we can organise and run something of this nature here, then maybe, just maybe, the corporate dollar will find its way out of the wallet and into soccer.

Until such time as this happens, don't hold your breath.

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STAFF
EDITOR: .....Micky Brock
SUB EDITOR: .....Aidan Ormond
STAFF REPORTER: .....John Economos
LAYOUT/TYPESETTING: .....Mary Quartly
.....Joanne El-Lakkis
.....Alamita Vea
SCANDESK: .....Alex Slafakas
COLOUR SCANS: .....Bill Hawthorne

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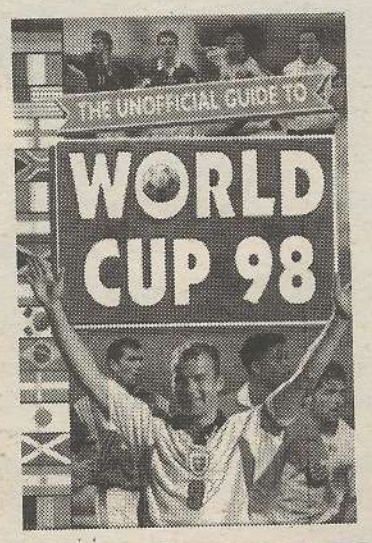
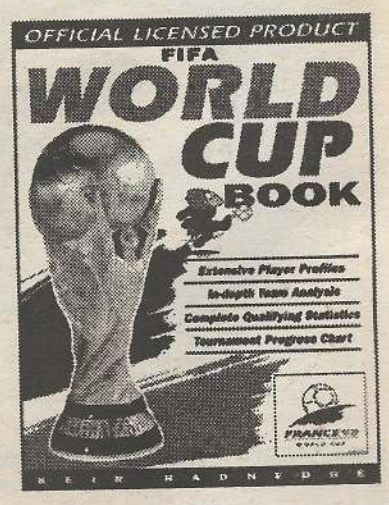
Who are the current World Cup holders?





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2: ALL correct entries received by Monday May 25 will be placed in a hat and the first drawn shall be deemed the winner,
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ANSWER: — — — — — — —

ZORAN MATIC DEPARTS MARCONI

By John Economos

Zoran Matic late last Sunday night dropped a bombshell when he served notice to his Marconi Board of Directors that he will terminate his coaching position at the club because of personal and business pressures back in his hometown Adelaide.

Just before Matic boarded his 8pm flight bound for Adelaide last Sunday night he told ABSW: "It was a hard decision but I had to make it. I have many problems back in Adelaide which urgently need my attention.

"I'm very sorry to go as I have not finished the job I was contracted to do. One season was not enough at Marconi to do the job.

"The club had been hard hit with departures and many problems off the pitch most unfairly.

"My future in Soccer is not known by me at this stage at all.

"All I know I have to get back to Adelaide fast there are no other interests, and will worry about Soccer much later."

It has been speculated that whilst Matic is back in Adelaide he will be enticed to takeover again the reins at Adelaide City since the sacking of coach John Nyskohus.

But ABSW believes that right now an Adelaide City Director is in South America looking up a Brazilian coach to entice to come to Australia and takeover the 'Black and Whites'.

Meanwhile Marconi's President Tony Labbozzetta told ABSW last night: "Zoran was a man that gave everything and his best to Marconi.

"We were confident Zoran would stay till the end of next season. But he has personal and business problems that need his urgent attention back in South Australia.

"We are very sorry to lose him. I believe one of his business associates is very sick over there.

"We are looking to appoint his replacement in the very near future," ended Labbozzetta.

It's believed that Marconi is looking to entice either Dr Joe Venglos, former national coach of Czechoslovakia, Frank Farina, Eddie Krncevic, Johnny Perin and even former Perth Glory man, Gary Marocchi.

Both Farina and Krncevic were former Marconi contracted players in the early eighties but were progressively sold off to Belgium and Croatian club respectively, which kicked off the European careers of both.

Matic added: "There was no way I could stay a week longer. We missed out on the Grand Final but if you don't finish second it is very hard by not getting a double chance at the title.

"I sincerely hope Marconi learned something from my stay with them."

Matic will be back in Sydney next Monday for urgent talks on behalf of his private company and the Sydney based Pioneer Group.

Zoran Matic: In happier days with Adelaide City.

GOOD OIL GOOD OIL GOOD OIL GOOD OIL

By John Economos

AN SBS TV cameraman last Saturday night at Melbourne's Olympic Park had his 'working bag' stolen from him during the after-match pitch invasion by jubilant Soccer fans.

Unfortunately the bag snatched from the 'shooter', as well as containing personal effects such as cash and cards, had two very valuable television film cassettes with important footage from the Ericsson League Grand Final of colour scenes panned of the excited crowd as well as two of the goals scored.

The bag was ultimately found abandoned on the playing pitch.

As expected, and most sadly, the bag had been rifled with all contents missing.

The film cassettes are most valuable to SBS TV.

SBS urgently needs the film footage contained in these cases to compile a colour montage that is to be screened by the network soon to mark the occasion of the Grand Final.

'Good Oil' pleads to any reader that may know the whereabouts, or has any information on these missing items, to urgently contact SBS offices as soon as possible, either in Melbourne or Sydney.

★ ★ ★

LAST SATURDAY night was a very special night of top soccer on anyone's calender.

In fact it was THE 'Soccer Night Of The Year'.

At 8pm we all knew, thus stayed at home, to see the Ericsson National League Grand Final being televised LIVE by SBS direct from Melbourne between South Melbourne and Carlton.

Every Soccer fan also stayed at home to later watch yet another very important telecast, this time from London, of this year's FA Cup Final between the Arsenal and Newcastle United.

Pending engagements, weddings, functions, meetings, corporate takeovers, funerals etc; were all promptly cancelled or postponed in order for the Soccer public to stay home and monitor both of these important telecasts.

Yet last Saturday night in Sydney, no less than THREE Super League matches were to be played with kick-off times scheduled for 6pm, 7pm and wait for it, EVEN at 8pm.

Why on earth would any sane Soccer body, be it club or Federation do this?

If catch-up matches had to be played, why on earth couldn't they have been played last FRIDAY night.

Two of these six teams in fact, played on Saturday night AS WELL as on Sunday.

Why for heavens sake?

Was this ludicrous, insane Soccer scheduling laid down by the 'Royal Blind Society' or the Board of the Australian Rugby League?

And yet many of our Soccer 'officials' when overseas teams come to Australia, ask "What do you think we can do to improve our Soccer and crowds here?"

'Good Oil' now strongly suggests to those same 'officials' after hearing about last Saturday's debacle, RESIGN from your positions.

★ ★ ★

BOBBY CATLIN, until recently Sydney Olympic's goalkeeper, who despite still having a year of his contract left to serve, but was recently inexplicably released by Olympic's new Technical Director Frank Arok, is now searching for a new 'home' in the Ericsson National League.

It has been rumoured that the Northern Spirit could be more than a little interested if negotiations with an overseas 'mystery keeper' or Perth Glory's Anthony Franken break down.

Bobby Catlin: Giant goalkeeper looking for a club.

NSW Super League clubs, including the Leichhardt Tigers, have attracted the gentle giant's attention.

★ ★ ★

The answers to last week's 'Good Oil' two Soccer Trivia questions that were asked two weeks ago at the Apia Soccer club:

a) "Which two national teams competing in the 1978 World Cup finals in Argentina held up their match for forty minutes because both teams came out wearing an all white strip?"

Answer: France and Hungary.

b) "Which nation has qualified for two World Cup finals yet never won a single match in either?"

Answer: El Salvador.

★ ★ ★

SYDNEY OLYMPIC last week received a huge cheque from the 'Five White Knights' that have privatised the Club.

The monumental sum of will evaporate almost immediately to pay off all of Olympic's existing debts which are also believed to total almost a million bucks.

★ ★ ★

PAUL TRIMBOLI, South Melbourne's National League captain over the past 10 years has, with monotonous regularity, proven he's nothing short of a genius on the playing arena.

'Trimmers' not only has been over the past decade an ace goal scorer, but an unbelievable 'engineer' and 'architect' of goals.

Last Saturday night at Olympic Park in the League's Grand Final, it was none other than Trimboli who destroyed Carlton.

Silently slotting back into the midfield, Trimboli released two magnificent world class passes to split Carlton's defence that led to Souths', and the season's, two most valuable goals.

In the ninth minute it was Trimboli's polished peripheral vision that spotted his unmarked left wingback Fausto De Amicis on the flank.

Elegantly, 'Trimmers' released a world class ball to De Amicis who effortlessly gave the cross back inside for Souths' striker John Anastasiadis to draw first blood in this grand battle.

Trimboli himself later almost scored, but that didn't deter this totally selfless player in concentrating to steer his team.

In the dying minute of the season's 'Ultimate Battle', and with the scoreline now still showing 1-1, who else but the "Terrific Trimboli" was on the scene to 'engineer' the very grateful substitute striker Con Boutsianis into nailing the winner to lift Souths to the 1998 Ericsson League championship.

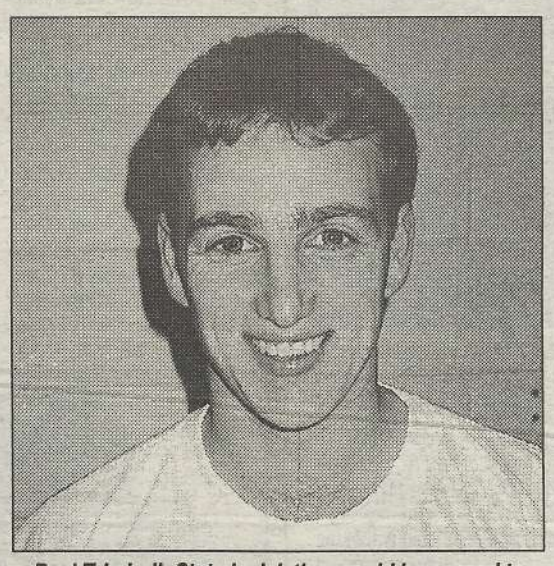
What a superb captain. What a superb player.

And lest any one of us ever forget, this very same Paul Trimboli was the player our national coach Terry Venables failed and refused to utilise on that dreadful, indelible, unforgettable and certainly by now, unforgivable evening, at the M.C.G., November 29th, in THAT match, Australia vs Iran.

Paul Trimboli on that dreaded night played no part whatsoever for Australia.

He was not used for one single minute in this vital 'Sudden Death' World Cup qualifier which ultimately has now cost Soccer Australia an urgently needed minimum of $2 million from FIFA in Paris.

Paul Trimboli will NEVER be transferred from South Melbourne.



Paul Trimboli: State legislation would be passed to prevent Paul from moving!

Not only would the Club's powerful 'Blue Army' supporters' group not tolerate it for one second, but even Victoria's fierce leader, Premier Jeff Kennett would promptly intervene.

The visionary and powerful Kennett would automatically plough through a State legislation banning any such pending dreams by potentially purchasing clubs seeking to 'hijack' one Paul Trimboli.

'Trimmers', you are in fact The Greatest.

Australia's Soccer fraternity salutes you.

★ ★ ★

ANTE SERIC, the young outstanding left wingback currently playing in Croatia's first division with ace club Hajduk Split, was late last week struck by an enormous dilemma.

Australia's Olympic Games coach Raul Blanco urgently needs this young talented attacking defender for the 2000 Olympics.

Despite having recently pledged his availability in Australia's hour of need, Seric late last week was suddenly drafted into Croatia's World Cup 25-man squad. This squad will later be cut back to the mandatory 22 prior to the final team that will fly to France early June.

Croatia has qualified for the World Cup. Australia has not.

And here lies young Ante's dilemma.

As soon as he dons a Croatian shirt with the World Cup squad, Seric automatically cuts himself out of Australia's Olympic, or for any other future Australian squad.

Last weekend Seric stated to the media: "A number of prominent European clubs have indicated that they would like to sign me.

"But they also made it very clear they are only prepared to do so on the condition that I do not present them with the same problems that Leeds United had to endure with Harry Kewell's selection for Australian teams.

"Clubs will not make a significant financial commitment to a player if he is going to interrupt the regular club season with trips back and forth to Australia for games against lowly ranked nations, or nations that do not field their full strength teams.

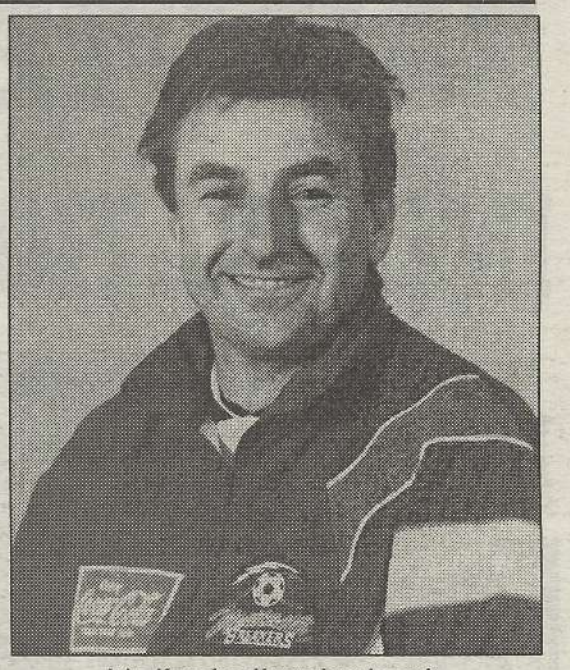
"Due to these circumstances, I'm carefully considering all my options and will inform Soccer Australia of my decision in due course," ended Seric.

Right now it looks highly likely that Seric will join Croatia's 25 man squad which in due course will be cut back to 22 that will travel to France early next month.

What is not generally known though, is that three months ago, Atletico Madrid offered the young Australian a five year lucrative contract.

Atletico Madrid's newly installed coach, Arrigo Sacchi, the former World Cup manager of Italy, travelled recently to Croatia to monitor Seric's form with Hajduk Split.

Raul Blanco: Australia's Olympic 2000 coach.



John Kosmina: Unemployed coach.

★ ★ ★

JOHN KOSMINA, the former coach of the Newcastle Breakers, is being chased by a State League club.

The former Australian World Cup captain has completed his three year contract with the Breakers and for the time being is out of a job.

It is believed that the Adelaide Sharks were initially interested in Kosmina but last week the South Australian club finally appointed former Marconi coach Manfred Schaefer to replace Adrian Santrac who guided the Sharks over the past two seasons.

★ ★ ★

DAMON LANGAN, Blacktown City's popular defender this Saturday night at the Gabbie Stadium will be making his 200th first grade appearance for the 'Black and Reds' when they take on Ryde City at 7pm.

The most likeable Langan made his debut with Blacktown when they were still in the National League back in 1990 in the Demons' away clash with the now newly crowned champions, South Melbourne.

The always quick with a joke Langan, since that very day has served the current NSW Super League leaders with nothing less than utmost distinction.

The staunch defender and loyal club servant will be presented by the Club with a special plaque prior to Saturday night's kick off.

Making this very special presentation to Damon will be a very special person.

England Premier League side West Ham has its managing director Peter Storrie currently in Sydney and will be at the match on Saturday evening to do the honours.

★ ★ ★

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SPIRIT PAY TRIBUTE TO INTERNATIONALS

By John Economos

NORTHERN SPIRIT, newly entered team to the Ericsson National League, last week saluted players that came up through the junior ranks in the northern regions of Sydney.

Five of the six not only graduated to play in the National League, but even went on to don an Australian shirt play on the international arena.

Murray Barnes, Joe Alagich, Gary Van Egmond, Ian Gray, Bobby Catlin and Robert Wheatley were all presented with special plaques by the club's president Kathryn Greiner.

In making the presentations, Kathryn Greiner stated: "Northern Sydney has been for years starved of top class Soccer. The Spirit has now been formed to provide and promote such a top class sport.

"Our Board is fully committed to this cause and our club is here to stay. "We are going to deliver.

"I look around the schools and the one game that unites them all is Soccer.

"On the Northern side of Sydney we have not been able to do this till now."

Northern Spirit bestowed Life Membership and life season passes to its six internationals in attendance.

Vice-President Emmanuel Zammit stated to ABSW: "We have in our area some 26,000 registered juniors.

"On the 25th of this month we will have our first meeting with the Youth Development Committee.

"Youth Development is what Soccer is all about," ended Zammit.

And with the opening of the club's offices at 13-15 Ridge Street, North Sydney decked out in club signage, Spirit official Melissa Down states that interest in the club has been high as a result and is looking forward to strong support from the fans in the Northern parts of Sydney, and indeed all over this great Soccer city.

Further, their e-mail address should be available soon, according to Down.

A happy Ian Gray accepts his citation.

Bobby Catlin with Kathryn Greiner.

Emmanuel Zammit, Vice President of Northern Spirit.

Joe Alagich receives his plaque.

Gary Van Egmond and Kathryn Greiner.

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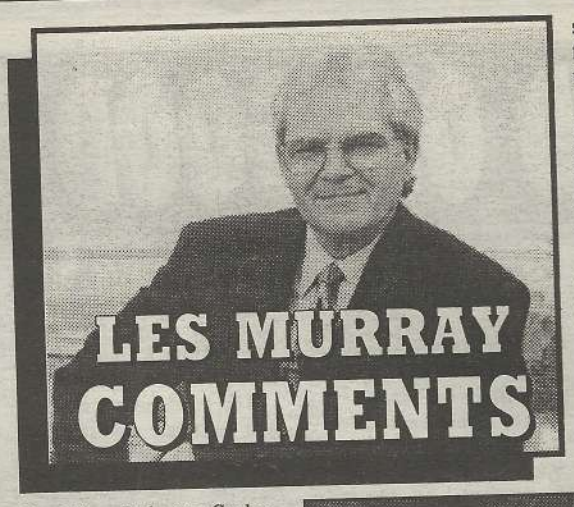


LES MURRAY COMMENTS

The European Cup, to be fair, has been lucky in recent years in serving up dream pairings for its final. Juventus v Ajax two years running and before that AC Milan against Barcelona.

But this one, the 1998 final coming up on Thursday morning our time does promise something extra special.

For it is between Juventus and Real Madrid, on a match-by-match basis the two most successful clubs in the history of European competition.

Only the fact that Real did not have the perfect domestic season and surrendered their title to their old rival Barcelona tarnishes slightly the perfection of this match up.

Indeed anything less than the title is unacceptable for Real, and coach Jupp Heynckes is destined to go, perhaps even if his team wins against Juve. Now that would be some irony.

A win on Thursday morning would be Madrid's first European Champions Cup title since 1966, a 32-year hiatus in a competition Madrid for long believed they owned.

So powerful was their image, built on five consecutive Champions Cups in the 50s, that to this day Real Madrid are the world's most famous club.

So what justice is it if the one coach who finally delivers that elusive trophy then gets the sack?

Real are not favourites for the match but they sure have the squad to win it. World Cup winner Bodo Ilgner will be in goal.

The backline will be Panucci, ex Milan, Hierro and Sanz with the fabulous Brazilian Roberto Carlos raiding on the left.

The midfield, from the right, is expected to be Karembeu, Seedorf and Redondo with the Brazilian Savio just ahead. And up front Morientes and Raul.

And that is the rub. So rich is this squad that there is no room for the sharpshooting Croatian Suker nor for the equally prolific Yugoslav Mijatovic, although the latter has been injured lately.

That the youngsters Morientes and Raul should keep them out says loads about the strike power of Spain in next month's World Cup. And that was never Spain's strong point.

But if Real has talent, so has Juventus. And that despite the strange fact in the current era that they have seen Italians in their starting line-up.

But one of those Italians, Alessandro Del Piero, will probably be the most talented man on the park, the man who will hold the key to the game's outcome.

Juve will have the solid, reliable international Peruzzi in goal behind a backline of Torricelli, Montero, Iuliano and Pessotto.

An immensely hard working midfield trio of Di Livio, Deschamps and Davids will form the support for the deft skills of Zinedine Zidane just ahead of them.

And to provide the finish, Inzaghi and Del Piero will lead the attack.

Quality players on both sides dominate the landscape. In the all white of Real Madrid there are real potential match winners in Raul, Morientes and Savio while both Karembeu and Seedorf can supply the killer passes those strikers need.

Savio, if fit, is a quality finisher and if Roberto Carlos unleashes one of those freak shots of his with the outside of his left foot, either from the dead ball or otherwise, Madrid might win the game just on that.

Close to our hearts will be Christian Karembeu, a French international but a New Caledonian.

He will be the first Oceania player to appear in a European Champions Cup final since Craig Johnston started for Liverpool against Roma in 1984, and then came on as a sub in the notorious Heysel final against Juventus the following year.

Given the status of the club he plays for, and that he is a star performer in it, Karembeu is arguably the most successful Oceania player of all-time.

That might be something to note by some of my more arrogant Aussie compatriots who look down their noses at the player potential of the south Pacific.

When an Emerton or a Rizzo or a Colosimo turns out for Real Madrid, we might be able to brag.

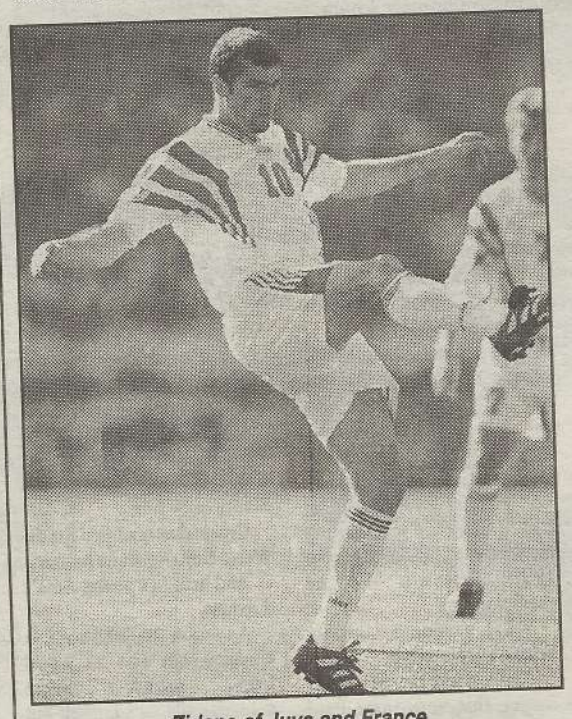
In all I agree with most observers that the match will be decided by the performances of Raul or Del Piero or both. Those two are the ones with the precocious gifts to truly turn the game.

Thankfully both are in top form.

The magnificent Raul.

Fernando Morientes of the Spanish giants Real.

The effervescent Fernando Hierro of Real Madrid.



Zidane of Juve and France

Real's Croatian striker Suker is not even guaranteed a start.

AROUND THE CLUBS

ILLAWARRA INSIGHT

By Phil Murphy

Wolves coach Nick Theodorakopoulos won't be allowing any of his players to go out on loan to local Premier League clubs this winter.

Several players were hoping to earn some pocket money during the off-season.

One of them, wing-back Neil Harlock, was also hoping to regain fitness by playing in the Premier League.

Harlock missed most of the Ericsson Cup season after breaking an ankle in the home game against Gippsland.

He has been back training with the Wolves for some time but didn't play in any games.

Neil Harlock

Northern United, one of the top Premier League clubs so far this season, were keen to sign him. The Kiwi international said he was disappointed by Theodorakopoulos' decision.

He said he had been hoping to play in the winter to be in top shape for the start of the new Ericsson Cup season.

The Kiwi international is one of nine Wolves players out of contract. He will be having talks with the club to renew his contract.

Among the other players off contract is goalkeeper Brett Hughes. He will have also talks with the club but told ABSW he wasn't sure if the Wolves wanted him to stay.

"I don't really know what the future holds for me," Hughes said. "I had a mixed season but I thought I played quite well overall."

Hughes missed a few games in the middle of the season but was one of the most consistent performers leading up to the play-offs. He also did well in play-off games against Adelaide City and Marconi.

□□□

Meanwhile midfielder Sasho Dimoski can't wait for the new season to start. He was one of the key players for the Wolves during a very successful season.

He started out at striker and scored eight goals in the Wolves Waratah Cup success. After two Ericsson Cup games, Dimoski suffered a quad injury at training and missed quite a few games.

When coach Nick Theodorakopoulos lost midfielder Michael Reda with a broken ankle, he had to find someone to fill that position.

Dimoski certainly wasn't the first candidate he thought of. When he was given the opportunity however, he did the job exceptionally well.

After all, he started his career as a midfielder and played with the Olyroos in that position.

It was the way he handled his defensive duties that surprised Wollongong fans.

"I believe I am a better player after what I did during the season," Dimoski said.

"I proved a few things to the coach and everyone at the club.

Michael Reda

Sasho Dimoski

"It was a very frustrating season until I came back into the side to fill Michael's position but things really came good for me after that.

"I really enjoyed playing that defensive midfield role."

Dimoski will be an automatic selection in that position when the new campaign starts.

VIC VOICE

By Dwyght Tuffnell

☛ **South Melbourne officially congratulated its players and coaching staff on making the Grand Final with a reception held at Crown Casino last week.**

Over 150 people turned out to pay tribute to South for their fantastic season.

Also in a busy Grand Final week, both Carlton and South Melbourne players enjoyed a first ever parade through the city's streets.

It was the first time the Ericsson Cup has ever had a Grand Final parade.

Both teams took separate routes to Melbourne Town Hall where they were greeted by dignitaries at a presentation.

☛ **Grand Final week had a dampener put on it when Melbourne newspaper the Herald-Sun carried a story in which Carlton striker John Markovski claimed he, and his family, are victims of racial abuse whenever he plays against South Melbourne.**

Markovski said that his mother may never watch him play again, so bad had the situation got.

Markovski, his parents, who are Macedonian, and his wife have been taunted by South Melbourne supporters according to the article.

South Melbourne reacted strongly to the article, saying in a media release that they were seeking legal advice and that Markovski's comments "amount to bringing the game into disrepute."

South Melbourne chairman, Peter Mitrakis said, "At a time when both clubs and this city should be focusing on the spectacle of an all Melbourne Grand Final, we're extremely disappointed and concerned that Mr Markovski's actions could incite unruly behaviour."

Mitrakis also said that the club expected Soccer Australia to deal with Markovski.

"South Melbourne is a proud club, with a rich history and standing within Australia's sporting community, and we will not be the subject of unfounded and inappropriate slurs which question that position," said Mitrakis.

Carlton were also quick to act, saying that Markovski "did not intend to offend any community."

General Manager Lou Sticca said, "Cartlon Soccer Club is a truly cosmopolitan club, and is no way condescending of any community.

"Carlton has hundreds of supporters of Greek heritage, and Cartlon is proud of its players who are of Greek heritage."

The Herald-Sun printed a follow-up the next day, saying that the matter should be forgotten and that the game is all that matters, but the timing of the controversial article could not have been worse.

☛ **Victorian Premier League clubs continue to strengthen their squads with Ericsson Cup players.**

Fawkner Blues recently acquired Melbourne Knights duo Ivan Kelic and Ante Deak while Green Gully have Lev Osman from Gippsland Falcons.

They won't be the last, Victoria's clubs have until June 30 to sign any other players from the Ericsson Cup.

ERICSSON CUP PLAYERS AT PREMIER LEAGUE CLUBS

Bulleen: Damon Collina (Melbourne Knights)

Preston Lions: Joe Tricarico (Gippsland Falcons)

Port Melbourne: Andy Vargas (Carlton), Daniel Allsopp (Carlton), Nick Tsaltas (Gippsland Falcons), Nick Palamaras (Gippsland Falcons)

South Dandenong: Clayton Bell (Gippsland Falcons), Doug Marcina (Gippsland Falcons)

Heidelberg United: Bojo Jevdjevic (Gippsland Falcons), Claudio Canosa (Gippsland Falcons), John Cutillo (Adelaide Sharks), Jim Tsekinis (Adelaide Sharks), Alex Duric (Adelaide Sharks), Zlatko Mihajlovic (Gippsland Falcons)

Fawkner: Ivan Kelic (Melbourne Knights), Ante Deak (Melbourne Knights)

Green Gully: John Didulica (Melbourne Knights), Lev Osman (Gippsland Falcons)

☛ **Still on the Premier League, Maurice Raponi has been appointed as coach for the rest of the season for Thomastown Zebras.**

He replaces Vlade Tortevski, who was sacked two weeks ago.

That followed the resignation of president Maria Carmignani.

Former Socceroo Oscar Crino was linked to the job but Raponi, also Thomastown's goalkeeper, has the job for the rest of the season after guiding the club to a win over Sunshine Georgies in his first game as caretaker.

Raponi also coached the Zebras last year before resigning mid-season.

Thomastown currently side in mid-table and still has a chance of making the finals.

"I'd like to give it another try," said Raponi.

"Last season, a couple of things didn't go right and after the win against Sunshine, I'm sure we can pick things up again."

Letters to the Editor

LES IS RIGHT ... AGAIN!

Dear Sir,

I have read with considerable interest the comments of Mr Les Murray on the subject of national team coaching in your Edition of 5 May, 1998, and I must say that I thoroughly agree with him.

The big problem is the choice of the person to be the National Technical Director of representative teams.

There is no doubt in my mind that my first choice would be Frank Arok but he has, however, tied himself by contract to Olympic and for family reasons has no long-term plan to continue to reside in Australia.

Eddie Thomson may not be as acceptable generally as others because, rightly or wrongly, there is a feeling that he has a policy of defensive strategy, although personally I feel he could do the job. However, he does have contractual obligations to a Japanese club.

As far as Joe Venglos is concerned, I know of him of course and I know the views held in respect of his abilities in FIFA and he would be an ideal candidate, depending on his consenting to remain in Australia for a reasonable number of years.

There would be others if a search was conducted and I am sure they would be available if the overall planning of the National Coaching program was agreed to as set out by Les Murray.

There is one other factor that I would like to mention, and that is that we have a significant number of former Socceroos now coaching and we also have a significant number of older coaches who have been coaching for many years.

In my capacity as Chairman of the Sub-Committee appointed by Soccer Australia to review the question of professionalism in the National League, I proposed that a National League licensing scheme for coaches be put in place and the National League coaches should only be employed if they held a licence, a condition of the licence would be that at least every three years (or such other number of years as was considered desirable) the coach in question attend a Brazilian or European Coaching Academy to update their coaching abilities and techniques and acquaint themselves with the changes that are taking place at a significant pace in International Soccer and the way it is being played.

At the request of the Chief Executive of Soccer Australia I have discussed this matter with the Soccer Australia Director of Coaching, Mr Selby, and he is preparing a paper on the subject to present to Soccer Australia.

I have been assured by Dr Havelange, the President of FIFA, that arrangements can be made for coaches to attend at the Brazilian Coaching Institute and also to spend perhaps another week or so with a leading Brazilian team being coached by a Brazilian coach who was considered to be one of quality. This is also confirmed by John Warren.

An implementation of the proposal, with reference to national teams suggested by les Murray, with the addition of the proposal that I have made for the licensing of coaches would, I think, improve the standard of coaching generally in Australia and provide a program which would make it easier for former Socceroos who have had basic coaching training to improve their skills, creating a reservoir of people available for national team coaching in the future without searching for overseas candidates.

Yours faithfully,
Sir Arthur George OA

Editor's Note:

Sounds like a wonderful idea and one that I would personally endorse as the way to go, but one small item keeps niggling away at me: Who would foot the bill for the coaches to attend these camps? Would the cash have to be found by the clubs or would Soccer Australia stump up? This may sound picky but with the soccer climate's present economic plight, the idea could be shot down before being given the chance to blossom.

Hill Undermined

Dear Sir,

Tony Labbozzetta has undermined much of his telling criticism of Hill & Co with his pathetic defence of the three former NSW clubs who were dumped out of the NSL. Of all the disastrous decisions inflicted on Oz soccer by Hill, the expulsion of Heidelberg/Collingwood, Brunswick Juventus and Parramatta Eagles was one of the few good ones.

No objective observer can claim that the NSL is poorer for the departure of these clubs. Can anyone deny that both Perth and Carlton have contributed more to the NSL in the short time they have been involved than the ragbag group of three did in ten years! By defending the indefensible Mr Labbozzetta does his standing in soccer circles no good at all.

If, by some miracle, in the future the NSL becomes a viable and thriving enterprise, then many of the existing NSL clubs such as Gippsland, Adelaide Sharks, the two Croatian clubs, Canberra, Newcastle and Brisbane will either leave the NSL or be restructured and recapitalised.

T.L. and others who yearn for the old status quo (pre-Hill, Negus) can only achieve their aim if the NSL continues to regresses and stagnate.

R. Melor,
Bondi, NSW.

Editor's Note:

This is quite indicative of the letters we have been receiving since covering this particular area of Australian soccer. I ask one question here: If Mr Hill were to lose over $4m in any other sphere of business, would he still be around?

Much of the cash he has used in his differing roles has been that out of public spending (ABC, State Rail etc). These were success stories but soccer is still in the doldrums, even if there is a chink of light at the end of the tunnel.

This is one question that all readers appear to be avoiding but your opinions are welcomed.

INDOOR SOCCER COMPETITIONS

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Male & Female Competitions

ENTRIES CLOSE 5 JUNE 98

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(continued from page 5)

A WORD ON SCHEINFLUG

Dear Sir,

I believe in the saying: "Actions speak louder than words."

Based on this, I thought of three persons to whom it can be related.

Firstly: Les Scheinflug. I've spoken in past letters about Raul Blanco and Terry Venables and I would like to say a few words about Les. For many years he has very successfully coached the 'Joeys' and the 'Young Socceroos.'

The world ranking of those two categories has been steadily above the Socceroos. The difference diminished only during the Venables era, when Australia succeeded to reach thirty-second from fifty-third.

We must never forget that it has always been through Les that our Socceroo ranks were being fed by skilled and efficient players. It was through the moulding, encouragement, teaching and patience of Les that those superb players came to fruition.

To sum up Les Scheinflug's performance through all those years as a coach, friend and adviser of his players, one can say he is a quiet and very efficient achiever.

Secondly: David Hill. This man not only helped so much for, and in so many different ways, Soccer in general in Australia, but he proved that he has a special flair as far as Soccer is concerned.

He is one of few who, from the very start until today, has maintained his opinion about Carlton being a noteworthy club.

The excellent performance of that club more than backed up his prediction.

Thirdly: Eddie Krncevic. This man has achieved the 'unachievable' by changing some of his players. Not only by improving their playing skill, but also physically, psychologically and their mental attitude towards the game, and by performing a miracle which consisted in succeeding to bring his team firstly into the top six, and then the unthinkable for a team in its first season: to the Grand Final.

Therefore, this coach, blessed with skill, knowledge, astuteness, expertness and experience, has been deprived from the much deserved nomination for the 'Coach-of-the Year.'

No wonder John Warren, during his 'On The Ball' interview with Les Murray, said it was not right to omit Eddie Krncevic from the nominations after making history 'twice' in Australian Soccer. That is, firstly to the top six, and secondly to the Grand Final.

Stephen Sassinis,
Nth Carlton, Vic.

Editor's Note:

Couldn't agree more. It's quite shameful that Krncevic has been left out of the 'Coach-of-the-Year' stakes as his performances with Carlton — not forgetting he is in his first season as a coach too — have been remarkable to say the least.

Perhaps a review of the situation in the future will cease this ridiculous state of affairs.

The sad thing is, it won't do the coach any good this time around!

READ THE FACTS!!

Dear Sir,

I refer to the letters from Mr Costa and Mr Colantori published in ABSW. Clearly these two gentleman have not had the benefit of the facts outlined to them or have chosen to ignore fundamental issues relating to the matters. Mr T Labbozetta was clearly going in to bat for Sydney obtaining at least one major soccer match in this season dominated by Melbourne.

The door was left ajar for a Sydney Final after credible murmurs surfaced in Australian soccer circles that should Wollongong have defeated Marconi in the semi-final, then Soccer Australia were to invoke their right to determine the venue, in the best interests of the game.

Obviously, playing the match in the home city of the higher placed team on the ladder makes equitable sense. However, Sydney had already been denied the World Cup qualifier against Iran back in November and the Ericsson Cup Grand Final, by virtue of the two leading teams, guaranteeing it for Melbourne as well, leaving Sydney high and dry for any major soccer event this year.

I applaud Mr Labbozzetta for his attempts to obtain this match for Sydney and, indeed, also state that his determination and attempts were vindicated by the pathetic turnout for the final in Melbourne.

As an unaligned fan of the code, I watched the match live in the Club Marconi lounge and the sight of empty terraces left me embarrassed. I dare say that there were more people within the Club than at Olympic Park on that Sunday.

So good on you Tony, although we didn't win the battle to get the game in Sydney, at least there was one official, trying to do justice to Australia's greatest, biggest and most beautiful city of Sydney.

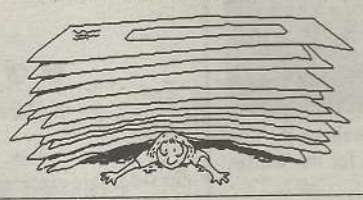
S. Barkho
Fairfield, NSW

Editor's note:

The whole point in carrying both sides of the argument, virtually word-for-word, was so that everyone could make up their own minds. The gentlemen concerned are entitled to their opinion, as you are. The facts and figures are there for all to see and read. It is the job of ABSW to report the facts, nothing more, and this we have done. It is up to the readers to determine who may be right or wrong. the best part is, it keeps a great debate going and everyone has the opportunity to add their tuppence worth to proceedings.

Letters to the Editor

Have your say on any soccer issue in the world. Preference will be given to short letters. Include daytime phone number for verification.



The Editor,
Australian & British Soccer Weekly
PO BOX 155,
Marrickville
NSW 2204
Fax: (02) 9550-9332

Short letters of about 400 words will be given preference in this column.

The opinions expressed on this page do not necessarily reflect those of this newspaper

NO SYMPATHY FOR HILL

Dear Sir,

I would just like to thank your publication for increasing the number of pages without any additional cost. Normally these things are reserved for an increase in price but this gesture to the fans shows that at least ABSW has their priorities right.

This letter probably reads like a member of your staff wrote it, but as a faithful, long time reader I am genuinely thankful for the gesture.

ABSW is sometimes viewed upon as being a little bit like visiting an old aunty at Christmas time — you just do it out of habit no matter how good or bad the experience is. Of late, however, I think that the paper has been rejuvenated and has tackled major issue in our code without prejudice to any side of an argument. Your recent interviews with David Hill and Tony Labbozzetta were a good example of this.

With our game being sneered upon by the mainstream press, there was no way that a Ray Gatt, John Taylor or Mike Cockerill could have devoted as much time or space to the respective pieces. Both articles were truly informative, especially Tony Labbozetta's interview.

I am not your typical fan that attends many games in any year, so I guess I can view the changing of any environment at grounds without difficulty.

In saying this, I have never been made to feel anything but welcome at Marconi Stadium in the 15-years I have attended matches there and similar improvements have now seen me feel equally comfortable at Leichhardt, Belmore, Edensor Park and Parramatta Stadium for Olympic and United games.

In noting this, I have to feel some sympathy towards the view of Tony Labbozetta that natural selection should preside over the determining of clubs competing in the A League. Mr Hill has attempted to destroy both Sydney United and Melbourne Knights over the past two seasons and yet, although I can only speak for United, efforts have progressed in raising the hospitality of their events. If the time comes that any particular club cannot meet a criterion, then, and only then, should they be excluded from the A League.

Mr Hill has hardly endeared himself to the grass roots soccer supporter. There are some Johnny-come-lately fans that seem to think that these improvements have only come about because of Hill's iron fist.

The old saying goes: "You catch more flies with honey than you do with vinegar", and this certainly rings true in all walks of life.

Mr Hill, I ask you to please leave the clubs to their devices. If they do not measure up, you can be sure that natural selection will take over. Similar sentiments are shared in politics so I bid you an equally fond farewell upon your election to parliament.

A Carnuccio,
Bossley Park, NSW.

Editor's note:

I cannot speak for David Hill, Tony Labbozzetta or any of the fine journalists you have mentioned, they are certainly big enough to speak for themselves. ABSW has, certainly in my time here, stated several times that the clubs with the lowest attendances will disappear unless they get their houses in order and put more bums on seats. Each and every Ericsson Cup club is attempting to do so and it will only be those who are successful that will survive, irrespective of what specific part of the community gave rise to them. Without going over old ground, now is the time for all supporters of the game to back it, and not pull it apart, as in the past. The time has been with us for while now when it is a case of 'put up or shut up'.

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HILL DESERVES SUPPORT

Dear Sir,

The performance of poor David Hill as the leader of soccer in this country has been scrutinised more than that of any sport leader I know. It's just as well he's not thin-skinned.

There has been criticism of Mr Hill from certain quarters recently – and particularly from Messrs Labbozzetta, Gray and Brondolino.

Well let me tell them something!! Investors are manoeuvring to get involved (or have recently got involved) in quite a number of NSW clubs – and the mood of the investment community is regarded as the best barometer of the viability of a market segment.

So, if those in the know — the investment community, — are giving the thumbs up to Mr Hill's handling of soccer in this country, who are these guys to be out there campaigning for his resignation?

Better still, the soccer fraternity and fans of this country have a right to scrutinise the contribution of these three to the game in this country, seeing they are in positions of responsibility.

While Mr Labbozzetta may have been successful in some ways (if keeping the game in Sydney's western suburbs 'within the family' can be thought of as success) what have the three really achieved for soccer as a whole?

As far as I can see Victoria is so far behind the rest of the country it's not funny, and NSW doesn't seem to be bursting with initiative.

So, Mr Labbozzetta, Mr Gray and Mr Brondolino, what progress has been made in your respective constituencies as the result of your influence during the period of your leadership?

Over to you – you owe it to the fans!

Bob Shephard
Email letter

Editor's note:

Once again I can only say that the gentlemen mentioned in these letters are more than capable of speaking for themselves, including Mr Hill, and it is not for me to defend nor attack them. They have the right to speak their minds, which most have done.

What is now important is for the supporters of the game to think hard about what has been written and to draw the conclusions they deem fit. It must also be remembered, there are two sides to all coins, and a third if you count what's between them. Never disregard that third side, it might just hold all the answers?

ABSW STEPPING THE RIGHT WAY

Dear Sir,

We were delighted upon reading in ABSW's 'Good Oil' (5/5/98) about the Liverpool Supporters' Club of NSW. Such media exposure adds a new dimension to the 'world game's' supporter base here in Australia. Not only are Australian soccer fans able to follow their teams in the Australian National League (and State) League(s) , but their love for the game extends beyond other barriers, such as distance, to embrace the entire international arena.

Supporter Clubs across Australia, such as Liverpool and ourself, provide its soccer fans the opportunity to come together and express themselves about their beloved team, which is so far away. Unfortunately, the closest thing we have in watching our teams are the live telecasts on the cable TV channels (or, of course, the delayed telecasts). It is quite astounding to realise just how much interest and support there is for teams from around the world. Distance merely strengthens a nostalgic bond between the soccer fan with his/her team of overseas.

Consequently, the next best alternative for these supporters are these Supporters Clubs, where they can come together and meet other people with the same passion for the team. It provides a great social background for people to get together.

The AEK Supporters Club (Sydney) praises ABSW for providing another avenue for supporters clubs to generate interaction and support within the local soccer community. One of our committee's chief objectives in the following year is to establish a network with other supporters clubs, whereby we can exchange ideas and learn from each other, and even co-operate together in different social activities.

ABSW has provided a vital springboard for the realisation of this objective.

Vas Vasilas
President
AEK Supporters Club (Sydney)

Editor's note:

We at 'ABSW Towers' want no more than to promote football and the harmony that can exist between the supporters. Any other clubs out there that would care to challenge the AEK supporters club to a pool/darts evening or whatever, can contact Vas at:

PO Box 440, Earlwood, Sydney 2206.

Rising Stars

NSW SUPER YOUTH LEAGUE

ROUND 10

UNDER 13

Macarthur Rams	v	Blacktown City	3-0
Leichhardt Tigers	v	Marconi Fairfield	P/P
Gladesville Hornsby	v	Sutherland Association	2-2
Southern Districts	v	Eastern Suburbs	2-1
Parramatta Eagles	v	Manly Warringah	P/P
Sydney Olympic	v	Newcastle Breakers	2-1
Wollongong City	v	Sydney United	1-3

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Sydney Olympic	11	10	0	0	35	8	27	30
Southern Districts	9	6	1	2	19	14	5	19
Sutherland Association	10	6	1	3	16	13	3	19
Gladesville Hornsby	8	5	1	2	15	7	8	16
Macarthur Rams	8	4	2	2	24	11	13	14
Parramatta Eagles	8	4	2	2	11	8	3	14
Newcastle Breakers	11	4	2	5	18	18	0	14
Manly Warringah	8	4	1	3	8	16	-8	13
Eastern Suburbs	10	4	0	6	16	15	1	12
Sydney United	9	4	0	5	16	27	-11	12
Leichhardt Tigers	9	2	1	6	14	20	-6	7
Wollongong City	9	1	3	5	10	14	-4	6
Blacktown City	11	2	0	9	6	20	-14	6
Marconi Fairfield	7	0	0	7	4	21	-17	0

UNDER 14

Macarthur Rams	v	Blacktown City	0-1
Leichhardt Tigers	v	Marconi Fairfield	P/P
Gladesville Hornsby	v	Sutherland Association	2-0
Southern Districts	v	Eastern Suburbs	8-0
Parramatta Eagles	v	Manly Warringah	P/P
Sydney Olympic	v	Newcastle Breakers	4-1
Wollongong City	v	Sydney United	4-0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Sydney Olympic	10	9	1	0	35	4	31	28
Southern Districts	9	8	1	0	40	6	34	25
Blacktown City	10	8	0	2	17	7	10	24
Gladesville Hornsby	8	6	1	1	23	9	14	19
Sutherland Association	10	5	1	4	21	15	6	16
Wollongong City	9	4	3	2	16	11	5	15
Newcastle Breakers	11	4	1	6	13	26	-13	13
Leichhardt Tigers	9	2	4	3	11	15	-4	10
Sydney United	9	3	1	5	11	18	-7	10
Eastern Suburbs	10	2	1	7	9	28	-19	7
Macarthur Rams	8	1	3	4	6	7	-1	6
Marconi Fairfield	7	1	0	6	1	19	-18	3
Parramatta Eagles	8	0	2	6	1	16	-15	2
Manly Warringah	8	0	1	7	0	23	-23	1

UNDER 15

Macarthur Rams	v	Blacktown City	0-0
Leichhardt Tigers	v	Marconi Fairfield	P/P
Gladesville Hornsby	v	Sutherland Association	2-2
Southern Districts	v	Eastern Suburbs	5-3
Parramatta Eagles	v	Manly Warringah	P/P
Sydney Olympic	v	Newcastle Breakers	4-2
Wollongong City	v	Sydney United	1-0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Sydney Olympic	10	8	1	1	35	15	20	25
Newcastle Breakers	11	7	0	4	27	20	7	21
Parramatta Eagles	8	6	0	2	23	13	10	18
Leichhardt Tigers	9	5	1	3	40	19	21	16
Gladesville Hornsby	7	4	3	0	16	7	9	15
Southern Districts	9	5	0	4	23	21	2	15
Marconi Fairfield	7	4	1	2	14	8	6	13
Blacktown City	9	4	1	4	15	16	-1	13
Manly Warringah	8	3	1	4	10	12	-2	10
Sydney United	9	2	3	4	10	14	-4	9
Sutherland Association	10	2	1	7	15	24	-9	7
Wollongong City	9	2	1	6	8	26	-18	7
Eastern Suburbs	10	2	0	8	11	31	-20	8
Macarthur Rams	8	0	3	5	6	27	-21	3

UNDER 16

Macarthur Rams	v	Blacktown City	2-3
Leichhardt Tigers	v	Marconi Fairfield	P/P
Gladesville Hornsby	v	Sutherland Association	2-0
Southern Districts	v	Eastern Suburbs	4-1
Parramatta Eagles	v	Manly Warringah	P/P
Sydney Olympic	v	Newcastle Breakers	1-0
Wollongong City	v	Sydney United	1-1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Parramatta Eagles	8	7	0	1	26	8	18	21
Newcastle Breakers	11	6	0	5	17	13	4	18
Blacktown City	10	5	1	4	13	12	1	16
Gladesville Hornsby	8	5	0	3	11	7	4	15
Sydney Olympic	10	4	2	4	15	16	-1	14
Sydney United	9	4	2	3	14	16	-2	14
Southern Districts	8	3	3	2	12	7	5	12
Manly Warringah	8	3	3	2	6	7	-1	12
Wollongong City	10	2	5	3	7	10	-3	11
Sutherland Association	10	3	2	5	13	21	-8	11
Marconi Fairfield	6	3	1	2	14	8	6	10
Eastern Suburbs	10	3	1	6	10	20	-10	7
Macarthur Rams	8	0	4	4	4	9	-5	4

National Youth League Grand Final

By Roy Hay

Australian Institute of Sport 4
Ivan Ergic
Chris Tanchevski
Matthew Kemp
David Onoforo

Adelaide City 1
Michael Cartwright

The Australian Institute of Sport won its second National Youth League title, the previous one coming in 1986, by beating Adelaide City four goals to one at Olympic Park on Saturday night.

The AIS was always in control after skipper Michael Ferrante worked his way to the by-line on the right hand side and crossed for David Onoforo to finish from close range. Adelaide City had a great chance to equalise within a minute when Omero Gosti was brought down by two AIS defenders in the box. Gosti picked himself up to take the penalty kick, but struck it wide of the post for a huge let-off for the AIS.

AIS extended its lead in 31 minutes after the ball was worked through to Newcastle striker Chris Tanchevski who swivelled and shot past Anthony Brearden. Eight minutes later Nathan Thompson set up Ivan Ergic for a shot into the corner of the net. Brearden pulled off an excellent double stop from Onoforo and Tanchevski to prevent the AIS running away with the game towards the end of the first-half.

In the second-half Adelaide City raised the tempo and tried hard to break back, though Manuel Sermeno had a shot for the AIS which hit the top of the bar. Ljubo Milicevic had to clear with a header on the goal line for the AIS, then keeper Grant Barlow just touched a shot from Michael Pirone and deflected it to safety. Then in 63 minutes, Pirone's well-flighted corner kick reached Adelaide skipper Michael Cartwright at the far post and he guided it past Barlow. Dustie McGregor and Pirone had good efforts as the Zebras pressed forward, but as so often happens the AIS made a breakaway and Matthew Kemp ran from midfield to beat the keeper for the fourth goal for the Canberra based lads.

It was good standard game worthy of a grand final, and no one could quibble about the result to which all players contributed. The season ends with the AIS as overall and Northern Division champion, Adelaide City the runner-up and South Australian leader, while the Victorian Institute of Sport took the Southern Division title. Mile Sterjovski finished as the leading scorer, despite the fact he had broken through into the Sydney United senior team not long after the midpoint of the season. Though the two leagues in the Eastern States have been disrupted by the frequent byes and postponements, it seemed to me that more players had graduated from youth league teams to their senior sides than in any previous years.

Congratulations to all who have taken part and my thanks to all who assisted with the preparation of the match reports throughout the season.

Ernie Merrick, Soccer's first High Performance coach

Head coach of the Victorian Institute of Sport, Ernie Merrick, is Australia's first High Performance soccer coach.

The Australian Coaching Council accredits coaches at Levels One, Two and Three in all codes, and then has an elite level beyond that for the very cream of coaches. This Merrick has achieved and joins a band of only 14 High Performance coaches throughout Australia. There are approximately 115,000 accredited coaches in Australia, 17,000 of them in soccer, so to join this elite band of 14 is a considerable achievement.

Ernie Merrick: High Performance coach.

Coaches who seek the highest award go through a testing program which identifies strengths and weaknesses on which the candidate has to work under supervision. Specific areas are targeted and the course involves theoretical and practical work.

Ernie Merrick is already well known for the work he has done on measuring the intensity of training programs and the use of weight training in improving agility and flexibility in young soccer players.

The Victorian Institute of Sport soccer program is already attracting considerable attention inside and outside the country and one of the sure indications of its success are the attempts at copying its achievements which have sprung up in soccer and in other sports.

The VIS has been extraordinarily successful in its aim of producing players for the Australian Joeys, Youth and Olympic squads, with senior representation certain to follow in significant numbers.

Unlike basketball, which has been able to send its elite coaches to the USA to further their experience, the soccer program has been limited by funding to domestic activity. So far there has been relatively little cross fertilisation between different sports, but this is an area in which future effort will be concentrated.

The high performance award is not seen as the last step for coaches, but rather another rung on the ladder of improvement which is essential if Australian sports, particularly soccer, are going to continue to keep up with world standards. The existing program is highly regarded internationally and several countries have sought the assistance of the Australian Coaching Council to advise on similar programs.

Martin Roberts, Manager of the High Performance Program at the ACC, made the point that there are now more foreign coaches in Australia than there were ten years ago. Australia needs to learn from them and capitalise on the intellectual property which results from the interaction between elite coaches in this country.

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GRAND FINAL

SOUTH MELBOURNE CHAMPIONS

BOUTSIANIS' LAST GASP WINNER ENDS CARLTON IN QUALITY FINAL

SOUTH MELBOURNE 2 CARLTON 1

Anastasiadis 8, Boutsianis 88 — Stergiopoulos 78

By Dwyght Tuffnell

A controversial goal two minutes from time from substitute Con Boutsianis won South Melbourne the 1997-98 Ericsson Cup.

South defeated Carlton 2-1 at Olympic Park on Saturday night, their third championship win since the league was formed.

The all-Melbourne affair was a see-sawing game, with both sides enjoying periods of domination.

Victorious coach Ange Postecoglou said it was unbelievable.

"Over the last seven years we've all dreamed the same dream, winning another championship," he said.

"We've won three games from three in the finals and that shows what sort of character the team has.

"We've overcome things all year. At the start of the season, everyone said we were favourites and the players had to carry that tag, but they did it with style."

South skipper Paul Trimboli — the only player still at the club to feature in the last winning Grand Final — felt this was a special win for him as captain and said that the team achieved everything they planned at the start of the season.

"We worked hard and we set goals at the start of the year and we accomplished them all," he said with immense pride.

"We did everything we wanted, finished on top, got straight into the Grand Final and won it on the day in 90 minutes."

The veteran got the ball rolling for South and ran his heart out.

John Anastasiadis managed to put a third goal past his brother Dean this season just eight minutes in.

Trimboli's pass, intended for Anastasiadis, was missed by Robert Trajkovski.

Sean Douglas came across and got in a good tackle but only succeeded in playing Fausto De Amicis through.

De Amicis calmly drew Carlton's Anastasiadis before laying the ball off to his right to his team-mate Anastasiadis who had the simplest of tap ins.

Poor Johnesy, booed by the South fans all night.

Two minutes later Goran Lozanovski, complete with new gold coloured boots, rattled the crossbar with thunderous free-kick from 35 metres.

The ball fell nicely for Trimboli but somehow, Anastasiadis managed to block his shot from just two metres.

Carlton were in danger of being blown away by a now rampant South Melbourne. To their credit though, they fought their way back into the game and really should have been level going in at half-time.

John Markovski, a controversial figure during Grand Final week, had a goal ruled out when he elbowed the ball out of Mike Petkovic's arms and into the net.

The hero of the Preliminary Final, Marco Bresciano, struck a shot that deflected off South defender Con Blatsis and onto the bar.

Mike Petkovic: Very impressive.

Then Andy Vlahos dribbled his way past a couple of defenders and delivered an inch perfect cross for Markovski but his header, from five metres, narrowly went over the bar.

Markovski, as was the case last week, missed a header that he would have expected to have scored from.

Lozanovski then thrilled the crowd with another long-range bomb but Anastasiadis, wary of what happened the last time, knew what to expect and saved clearly.

John Anastasiadis had a golden chance to give South what would have been a commanding 2-0 lead at half-time.

Bill Damianos got behind the Blues defence and found Anastasiadis in the middle.

It was almost as he had too much time and his tame shot from very close was saved by his brother.

South tightened up after half-time and most of the second-half had none of the fireworks the first produced.

That was until the 76th minute, when Carlton coach Eddie Krncevic brought on Marcus Stergiopoulos for David Cervinski.

It seemed a strange move at first but Krncevic's decision was vindicated almost immediately.

Dean Anastasiadis: Great duel with brother John.

Kresimir Marusic passed to Trajkovski on the right and his cross found Bresciano.

Stergiopoulos, waiting on the egde of the area, received the ball from Cervinski, another sub, and beat Petkovic with a first-time right foot shot.

It was his first touch, and also his first goal for Carlton.

The game seemed certain to be decided in extra time or even the dreaded penalty shoot-out. But another substitute, Boutsianis, delivered the goods when most required. Yet it was controversial.

Trimboli played a pass looking for Boutsianis but Douglas was there first. Douglas went down under the challenge of Boutsianis and referee Eugene Brazzale waved him on.

Boutsianis ran on and beat Anastasiadis with a cool finish and celebrated whilst the Carlton players all hounded Brazzale in some futile attempt to get him to change his mind. The pitch was awash with emotions.

Two minutes into stoppage-time and Boutsianis had a goal disallowed when he knocked in a Coveny pass but was adjudged offside.

Boutsianis: "I felt it was fair because he (Douglas) was basically off-balance."

Replays showed that the decision was very dubious.

Boutsianis and three other South players though, hadn't heard the whistle and celebrated near the corner flag while the game went on.

Carlton attacked with South a few players light but couldn't manage to score.

The players and Postecoglou could laugh about it afterwards, but had they conceded an equaliser from it, it wouldn't have been quite so funny.

Postecoglou said the win wouldn't be overshadowed by the nature of their winning goal. He said he was a little bit worried when they missed a chance through Trimboli and Anastasiadis but that his side defended well.

"When we conceded the equaliser I felt we started to play well, putting them under pressure and creating chances. The boys stuck it out and got the rewards in the end."

Carlton skipper Douglas said that everyone in the side should hold their heads up. "We've got nothing to be disgraced about, we went out there and put a show up. In our heads, even though we lost, we weren't beaten. We've got to go back and work hard and come back stronger next season."

THE GOAL THAT WAS AND THE GOAL THAT WASN'T?

Carlton's Sean Douglas appeared to be pushed by Boutsianis after Paul Trimboli had played a through-ball, but referee Eugene Brazzle played Boutsianis on to score with an ice-cool finish.

"I made a run and Trimmers whipped it over. By the time the defender (Douglas) turned, I just tried to get my shoulder into his shoulder and unbalance him, I don't know how everyone else saw it," Boutsianis explained.

"I felt it was fair contact because he was basically off balance. I know Carlton won't say that, but I thought it was fair."

Douglas said he didn't know what happened, just that he had his eyes on the ball and then fell.

"From what I felt, it was a push in the back. I was told by (referee) Eugene (Brazzale) that Con actually tripped and fell into me so it wasn't a purposeful push."

Boutsianis had a goal disallowed for offside and he, David Clarkson, Fausto De Amicis and Vaughan Coveny ran to the corner flag to celebrate, oblivious that the game was still going on and Carlton were in attack.

Even if the first Boutsianis goal was controversial, the second incident provided much amusement to everyone, except perhaps Ange Postecoglou.

"I couldn't believe it. I was screaming at the players to get back," said Postecoglou.

Boutsianis and his mates hadn't heard the whistle.

"There was a little camera that was running behind the goal," said Boutsianis, "I was following that and dancing to it."

South: Petkovic, Iosifidis, De Amicis, Blatsis, Clarkson, Panopoulos, Trimboli, Damianos, Lozanovski (Coveny 73), Baser, J.Anastasiadis (Boutsianis 84).

Blues: D.Anastasiadis, Trajkovski, Douglas, Marusic, Lapsansky, Vlahos (A.Cervinski 64), Colosimo, Markovski, D.Cervinski (Stergiopoulos 76), Atkinson, Bresciano.

Scorers :
South: J.Anastasiadis 8, Boutsianis 88
Blues: Stergiopoulos 78

Referee: Eugene Brazzale

Crowd: 16,000

GRAND FINAL

ERICSSON CUP

THE BIG DAY IN MELBOURNE

On Australian Soccer's 'big one' our man on the spot was Stuart 'The Scoop' Jones. Here his gives his account of the day and night of May 16, 1998, the date of destiny for South Melbourne, the day they scratched a seven-year itch and once again became Premiers. It was also the day that Carlton, a new entity born out of the dream of a few, became a real club, with a real history, and the beginnings of a tradition and a rivalry with South that will burn even brighter after this weekend. Over to you, S.J. ...

Grand Final day starts with a tradition that soccer in this country has never really practiced. In Rugby League and AFL, Grand Final breakfasts have been popular and this soccer equivalent brought out a great many soccer enthusiasts.

Presented by Melbourne radio station, Stereo 974, the brunch brought together representatives of both teams.

Even South Melbourne coach Ange Postecoglou managed a brief appearance on this most important of mornings.

The crowd were enthusiastic and were looking forward to a cracking evening.

There were strong hopes of a sell out but by 6.30pm the ground was fairly empty. However when the South Melbourne faithful filled the far end of the ground around 7pm the flavour of a Grand Final atmosphere was developing.

Both sides warmed up whilst James Reyne provided the entertainment in song.

The Soccer Australia budget was surely blown on this as celebrities Spiderman, Plucka Duck, Blinky Bill and Felix the Cat went around the perimeter geeing the crowd up.

The irony of the no flares policy (which of course was ignored by the South fans) was that by 7.50pm, the ground was filled with smoke after the official fireworks display which, to give it its due, was spectacular, albeit brief.

At 7.55pm the crowd went wild with the entry of the players into the arena accompanied by 'the final countdown' blaring in the background.

Goran Lozanovski added his own colour to the occasion with his new golden boots.

By the time the national anthem was sung there still gaps in the crowd which was disappointing.

While waiting for kick off, the crowd was surprisingly quiet. Eve after kick off you would think it were a funeral and not a Grand Final.

Unfortunately the volume rose only when the flares came flying in. Sure they add colour but they should not be thrown around. Unfortunately, a ball boy was hit by one but fortunately was okay.

The crowd was quieter than a Sydney Olympic crowd at the Sydney Football Stadium.

When South Melbourne scored, the crowd were vocal but unfortunately there were so many flares thrown that you could not see the ball in Michael Petkovic's area.

If the goal did not wake the crowd then Goran Lozanovski's two long range free kicks certainly did.

John Markovski was showing more fire than the flares but could not convert, much to the enjoyment of the South fans.

As South Melbourne got closer to the prize, the amount of flares and trouble increased, but they were left in silence when Carlton equalised.

Many sections were vocal then showing that Carlton do have support around town.

However, the Souths boy had the last laugh with the winner right on full time. Perhaps the funniest moment came two minutes later when four Souths players celebrated a third goal whilst the game continued as it had been disallowed. The fans were screaming to them rejoin the game as Souths were four men down!

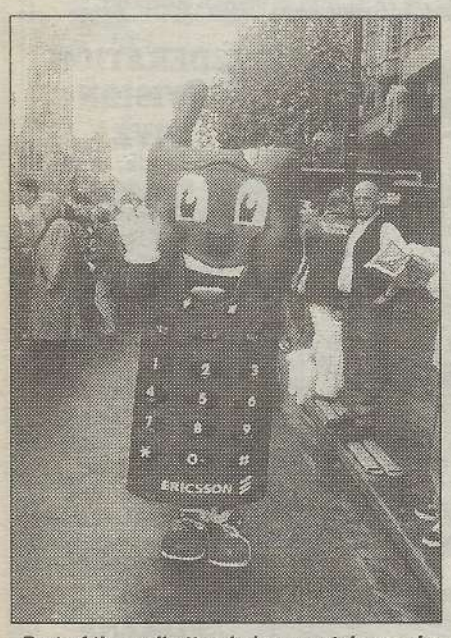
The players probably thought all the yelling was for the goal — it was infact telling them to get back!

Imagine how they would have felt had Carlton scored as a result?

At full time the crowd invaded the pitch in pure jubilation.

South Melbourne were champions, and Lakeside was about to rock all night.

And rock it did!



Part of the well-attended pre-match parade in Melbourne on Friday.

Trimmers, the South players and the Ericsson Cup.

Trajkovski slips and John Anastasiadis pounces for the first goal for South.

Carlton's Dave Cervinski (L) in typically commanding form as Trimmers watches on.

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1998 WORLD CUP

Brazil	4.00
Germany	7.00
Italy	8.00
France	8.00
England	9.00
Holland	9.00
Argentina	13.00
Spain	13.00
Yugoslavia	21.00
Croatia	31.00
Romania	31.00
Nigeria	31.00
Denmark	34.00
Norway	41.00
Columbia	67.00
Belgium	67.00
Bulgaria	67.00
Paraguay	81.00
Chile	101.00
Cameroon	141.00
Austria	141.00
Mexico	141.00
USA	201.00
Sth Africa	201.00
Morocco	251.00
Scotland	251.00
Sth Korea	401.00
Saudi Arabia	401.00
Jamaica	501.00
Japan	501.00
Iran	661.00
Tunisia	661.00

NSW STATE LEAGUES

SUPER LEAGUE

ROUND 11

FIRST GRADE

Blacktown City 2
Angelucci 17 Smith 56
Sutherland Sharks 0

Macarthur Rams 3
Whiddett 42,47
Connolly 84
Canterbury Berries 1
Percy 46

Leichhardt Tigers 2
Tlirreca 43, Ortiz 55
Ryde City Gunners 1
Koch 35

Eastern Suburbs 3
Bennett 10
Daniels 61p
Mikovski 76
Parramatta Eagles 3
Mendez 25p
Karavatakis 44
Reveley 79

St George Saints 2
Araujo 37
Holmes 43
Bonnyrigg WE 2
Mancino 12
Harding 85

Bankstown City Lions 4
Eagleton 43
Celik 49
Adioski 62p
Angievski
Central Coast 4
Preston 1,18,47
Roberts 17

Leichhardt Tigers 1
Bazdaric 65
Canterbury M'ville 1
Mendes 87

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Blacktown City	10	7	0	3	22	12	10	21
Eastern Suburbs	9	6	2	1	22	12	10	20
Canterbury Berries	11	6	2	3	19	13	6	20
Macarthur Rams	10	6	1	3	18	15	3	19
Leichhardt Tigers	10	5	3	2	18	11	7	18
Parramatta Eagles	9	5	1	3	19	13	6	16
Bonnyrigg WE	10	4	3	3	16	14	2	15
Bankstown City	11	4	3	4	17	16	1	15
Central Coast	10	2	2	6	15	16	-1	8
Ryde City Gunners	10	2	1	7	10	21	-11	7
Sutherland Shire	10	1	2	7	4	20	-16	5
St George Saints	10	1	2	7	11	28	-17	5

Under 21

Blacktown City 3 bt Sutherland Sharks 1, Macarthur Rams 2 bt Canterbury Berries 0, Leichhardt Tigers 3 bt Ryde City Gunners 2, Eastern Suburbs 2 drew Parramatta Eagles 2, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 4 bt St George Saints 2, Central Coast 4 bt Bankstown City Lions 1, Canterbury Marrickville 3 bt Leichhardt Tigers 2, Macarthur Rams 3 bt St George Saints 0, Eastern Suburbs 2 bt Macarthur Rams 0, Parramatta Eagles 5 bt Central Coast 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Bonnyrigg WE	10	8	0	2	37	12	25	24
Eastern Suburbs	10	7	2	1	28	8	20	23
Parramatta Eagles	10	7	1	2	25	13	12	22
Macarthur Rams	11	7	0	4	21	12	9	21
Blacktown City	10	6	1	3	22	16	6	19
Canterbury Berries	11	6	0	5	24	24	0	18
Leichhardt Tigers	10	5	2	3	24	17	7	17
St George Saints	10	5	0	5	16	117	-1	15
Ryde City Gunners	10	3	1	6	13	28	-15	10
Bankstown City	11	1	1	9	11	25	-14	4
Sutherland Shire	10	1	1	8	13	31	-18	4
Central Coast	11	1	1	9	13	44	-31	4

Under 18

Blacktown City 4 bt Sutherland Sharks 0, Macarthur Rams 2 bt Canterbury Berries 0, Leichhardt Tigers 2 drew Ryde City Gunners 2, Parramatta Eagles 5 bt Eastern Suburbs 0, St George Saints vs Bonnyrigg White Eagles p/p, Bankstown City Lions 3 bt Central Coast 2, Leichhardt Tigers 3 bt Canterbury Marrickville 1, Macarthur Rams 2 bt St George Saints 1, Macarthur Rams 3 bt Eastern Suburbs 1, Parramatta Eagles 2 bt Central Coast 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Parramatta Eagles	10	9	1	0	39	7	32	28
Macarthur Rams	11	7	2	2	20	10	10	23
Blacktown City	10	7	1	2	19	8	11	22
Bankstown City	11	5	3	3	20	12	8	18
Ryde City Gunners	10	5	2	3	15	14	1	17
Leichhardt Tigers	10	4	4	2	23	18	4	16
Eastern Suburbs	10	3	4	3	17	20	-3	13
Bonnyrigg WE	9	3	1	5	13	17	-4	10
Central Coast	11	2	2	7	16	23	-7	8
St George Sains	9	2	2	5	9	16	-8	8
Canterbury Berries	11	1	2	8	7	25	-18	5
Sutherland Shire	10	0	2	8	6	33	-27	2

FEDERATION DIVISION ONE

ROUND 13

First Grade: AC United 2 (M. Sabra 80m,) bt Rockdale City Suns 1 (O. El ali 31m/34m), Illawarra Lions 1 (L. Larfield 30m) drew Hills United 1 (P. Thompson 60m), Bathurst '75 3 (M Rooke 19m, A Lemmoine 31m, D. Kostritch 80m) bt Penrith Panthers 1 (B Buckpitt 49m), AC United vs Belmore Hercules p/p, Auburn United 3 (T. Caruso 65m, N. Codmani 75m, T. Ormac 85m) bt Manly Warringhah 1 (K. Foster 83m), Fairfield Bulls 2 (C. Gionetti 14m, R. Gionetti 89m) bt Hurstville City 1 (own goal 73m), Stanmore Hawks 5 (E. Briscoe 22/42/66m, P. Kypreos 77m, P. Cacciola 85m) bt Mt Pritchard 1 (J Bruni 44m), Rockdale City Suns 6 (B Petrovski 7m, G. Trposki 38m, A. Chumkovski 41/65m, A. Kotevich 58m, A. Folladosa 88m) bt Moorebank Sports 2 (S Key 44m, S Watkins 77m).

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Fairfield Bulls	13	10	0	3	32	15	17	30
Stanmore Hawks	12	9	0	3	32	15	17	27
Bathurst '75	13	7	4	2	18	14	4	25
Hurstville City	13	7	1	5	26	16	10	22
Penrith Panthers	11	6	2	3	17	12	5	20
Moorebank Sports	12	6	2	4	18	21	-3	20
Auburn United	13	6	2	5	20	24	-4	20
Rockdale City Suns	14	6	0	8	29	27	2	18
Illawarra Lions	14	5	1	8	18	20	-2	16
Manly Warringah	12	4	3	5	19	15	4	15
AC United	13	3	4	6	20	25	-5	13
Hills United	12	3	3	6	12	23	-11	12
Belmore Hercules	10	2	1	7	10	22	-12	7
Mt Pritchard	12	1	1	10	14	36	-22	4

U-21: Rockdale City Suns 3 bt AC United 2, Hills United 2 bt Illawarra Lions 0, Bathurst '75 2 drew Penrith Panthers 2, AC United vs Belmore Hercules p/p, Manly Warringah 6 bt Auburn United 1, Fairfield Bulls 2 bt Hurstville City 1, Mt Pritchard 2 bt Stanmore Hawks 0, Rockdale City Suns 5 bt Moorebank Sports 3, Moorebank Sports 2 drew Manly Warringah 2.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Fairfield Bulls	13	8	2	3	49	22	27	26
Hills United	12	8	2	2	32	12	20	26
AC United	12	8	2	2	3	26	1412	26
Manly Warringah	12	7	3	2	28	14	14	24
Auburn United	13	7	2	4	28	26	1	23
Bathurst '75	14	5	4	5	26	14	12	19
Rockdale City Suns	13	5	3	5	29	28	1	18
Moorebank Sports	12	5	4	3	23	21	2	17
Hurstville City	12	5	1	6	21	25	-4	16
Penrith Panthers	11	4	3	4	17	16	1	15
Stanmore Hawks	13	4	2	7	21	23	-2	14
Mt Pritchard	12	4	2	6	21	25	-4	14
Belmore Hercules	10	1	1	8	10	35	-25	4
Illawarra Lions	13	0	0	13	9	64	-55	0

U-18: Rockdale City Suns vs AC United p/p, Hills United 2 bt Illawarra Lions 1, Bathurst '75 1 dr Penrith Panthers 1, AC United vs Belmore Hercules p/p, Manly Warringah 11 bt Auburn United 0, Fairfield Bulls vs Hurstville City p/p, Stanmore Hawks 1 bt Mt Pritchard 0, Moorebank Sports 3 bt Rockdale City Suns 1, Manly Warringah 1 bt Moorebank Sports 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Bathurst '75	14	10	3	1	33	12	21	33
Manly Warringah	12	9	1	2	32	11	21	28
Stanmore Hawks	13	9	0	4	26	14	12	27
Fairfield Bulls	12	8	2	2	23	11	12	26
Illawarra Lions	14	7	1	6	44	29	15	22
Moorebank Sports	12	7	1	4	24	11	13	22
Hills United	12	6	4	2	24	13	11	22
AC United	11	5	1	5	19	19	0	16
Penrith Panthers	11	5	1	5	17	18	-1	16
Mt Pritchard	12	4	1	7	21	19	2	14
Rockdale City Suns	13	2	2	9	20	28	-8	8
Belmore Hercules	10	2	0	8	10	33	-23	6
Hurstville City	11	1	2	8	10	32	-22	5
Auburn United	13	0	1	12	10	63	-53	1

FEDERATION DIVISION TWO

ROUND 11

First Grade: Greystanes 1 dr Arncliffe Scots 1, Hajduk Wanderers 2 drew Dulwich Hill 2, Hurstville ZSC 1 bt Sydney District 0, University of NSW vs Parramatta City p/p, Gladesville United 2 bt Mt Druitt Town Rangers 1, Alexander Warriors 1 bt Liverpool City 0, Dulwich Hill 3 bt Greystanes 2, Sydney District 4 bt Parramatta City 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Dulwich Hill	10	9	1	0	35	8	27	28
Hajduk Wanderers	10	7	3	0	27	7	20	24
Greystanes	10	5	2	3	15	14	1	17
Alexander Warriors	9	5	1	3	19	12	7	16
Hurstville Zsc	9	4	3	2	17	13	4	15
Arncliffe Scots	11	4	1	6	18	20	-2	13
Sydney District	11	4	0	7	14	25	-11	12
Mt Druitt Town	10	3	2	5	20	21	-1	11
Liverpool City	10	3	1	6	9	19	-10	10
Gladesville United	10	2	2	6	16	28	-12	8
Parramatta City	8	2	1	5	11	21	-10	7
Uni of NSW	10	2	1	7	10	23	-13	7

U-21: Greystanes 2 bt Arncliffe Scots 1, Hajduk Wanderers 4 bt Dulwich Hill 1, Hurstville ZSC 6 bt Sydney District 1, University of NSW vs Parramatta City p/p, Mt Druitt Town Rangers 2 bt Gladesville United 1, Liverpool City 4 bt Alexander Warriors 3, Greystanes 2 bt Dulwich Hill 1, Parramatta City 5 bt Sydney District 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Greystanes	10	9	0	1	23	8	15	27
Hajduk Wanderers	10	7	0	3	40	10	30	21
Mt Druitt Town	10	7	0	3	26	11	15	21
Dulwich Hill	10	6	2	2	34	14	20	20
Uni of NSW	10	5	3	2	17	9	8	18
Hurstville ZSC	10	5	0	5	24	23	1	15
Gladesville United	10	3	3	4	17	15	2	12
Parramatta City	9	3	2	4	18	18	0	11
Liverpool City	10	2	3	5	18	23	-5	9
Alexander Warriors	9	2	0	7	12	28	-16	6
Arncliffe Scots	10	2	0	8	6	38	-32	6
Sydney District	10	1	18	8	8	36	-38	4

U-18: Greystanes 3 bt Arncliffe Scots 0 (Win by Forfeit), Hajduk Wanderers 3 bt Dulwich Hill 0, Hurstville ZSC vs Sydney District p/p, University of NSW vs Parramatta City p/p, Mt Druitt Town Rangers 3 bt Gladesville United 0, Liverpool City 3 bt Alexander Warriors 0, Dulwich Hill 2 bt Greystanes 1, Sydney District 5 bt Parramatta City 2.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Mt Druitt Town	10	9	1	0	36	3	33	28
Liverpool City	10	7	2	1	21	6	15	23
Gladesville United	10	7	1	2	43	12	31	22
Hajduk Wanderers	10	6	3	1	54	9	45	21
Sydney District	10	6	1	3	30	15	15	19
Greystanes	10	5	0	5	22	14	8	15
Hurstville ZSC	9	4	1	4	9	17	-8	13
Dulwich Hill	10	3	2	5	25	16	9	11
Parramatta City	9	3	1	5	28	21	7	10
Uni of NSW	10	2	0	8	16	22	-6	6
Arncliffe Scots	11	1	0	10	5	79	-74	3
Alexander Warriors	9	0	0	9	2	77	-75	0

FEDERATION DIVISION THREE

First Grade: Sydney University 4 bt Hawkesbury City 0, Flamencos 3 bt Maroubra United 0, Colo Colo vs Glebe Wanderers p/p, Granville Greenisland 4 drew Trasandinos 4, White City 7 bt Camden Tigers 2, Prospect United 4 bt Hakoah 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Glebe Wanderers	7	6	1	0	21	11	10	19
Camden Tigers	8	5	1	2	20	16	4	16
Trasandinos	8	5	1	2	20	18	2	16
Sydney University	6	4	1	1	21`	8	13	13
Colo Colo	6	4	0	2	11	10	1	12
Prospect United	6	3	1	2	15	9	6	10
White City	7	2	0	5	17	17	0	6
Maroubra United	7	2	0	5	17	17	0	6
Granville Greenisland	6	1	2	3	11	19	-8	4
Hakoah	6	1	1	4	5	13	-8	4
Flamencos	8	1	1	6	17	26	-9	4
Hawkesbury City	7	1	0	6	9	21	-12	3

Second Grade: Sydney University 3 bt Hawkesbury City 0, Flamencos 2 bt Maroubra United 1, Colo Colo vs Glebe Wanderers p/p, Granville Greenisland 2 drew Trasandinos 2, White City 3 bt Camden Tigers 2, Hakoah 0 drew Prospect United 0.

FEDERATION DIVISION FOUR

First Grade: Nepean District 1 bt United Eagles 0, Sydney Crescent Star vs Balmain Tigers p/p, Lithgow Workmen's 3 bt Earlwood Hermes 1, Springwood vs Prairiewood Untied p/p, Holy Cross - Ryde vs Fraser Park p/p, CSI Schofields 2 drew Fairfield Kings 2, Marrickville vs St Josephs p/p, Balmain Tigers vs St Josephs p/p.

Second Grade: Nepean District 5 bt United Eagles 1, Sydney Crescent Star vs Balmain Tigers p/p, Earlwood Hermes 3 bt Litghow Workmen's 2, Springwood vs Prairiewood United p/p, Holy Cross - Ryde vs Fraser Park p/p, CSI Schofields 4 bt Fairfield Kings 1, Marrickville vs St Josephs p/p, Balmain Tigers 1 drew St Josephs 1.

FEDERATION DIVISION FIVE

First Grade: Bossy 2 drew 2 Racing, Liverpool Olympic 2 drew Sporting SCC 2, AVA United 10 bt Liverpool Warriors 0, Eastern Creek Pioneers vs Kosciuszko p/p, Auburn Star 2 bt White Valley 0.

Second Grade: Racing 3 bt Bossy 0, Liverpool Olympic 1 bt Sporting SCC 0, AVA United 3 bt Liverpool Warriors 1, Eastern Creek Pioneers vs Kosciuszko p/p, White Valley 3 bs Auburn Star 0.

WOMENS STATE LEAGUE DIVISION ONE

First Grade: Gladesville Ravens 1 bt UWS Macarthur 0, Marconi Fairfield 13 bt Eastern Suburbs 0, Sydney United vs Sutherland Sharks p/p, NNSW ITC/Academy vs NSW INST/Academy p/p, Moorebank Sports vs Nepean Panthers p/p, Marconi Fairfield 11 bt Moorebank Sports 0.

Second Grade: Gladesville Ravens 7 bt UWS Macarthur 1, Eastern Suburbs 1 drew Marconi Fairfield 1, Sydney United vs Sutherland Sharks p/p, NNSW ITC/Academy vs NSW INST/Academy p/p, Moorebank Sports vs Nepean Panthers p/p, Marconi Fairfield 2 bt Moorebank Sports 1.

NSW STATE LEAGUES

FEDERATION DIVISION THREE SECOND GRADE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Trasandions	8	5	2	1	15	11	4	17
Sydney University	7	5	1	1	20	7	13	16
Flamencos	8	4	2	2	11	10	1	14
Camden Tigers	8	4	1	3	16	13	3	13
White City	7	3	2	2	20	15	5	11
Glebe Wanderers	7	3	2	2	10	6	4	11
Prospect United	7	3	1	3	10	7	3	10
Hawkesbury City	7	2	1	4	7	10	-3	7
Maroubra United	7	2	1	4	12	17	-5	7
Granville Greenisland	6	1	1	4	5	11	-6	4
Hakoah	6	1	1	4	5	14	-9	4
Colo Colo	6	1	1	4	8	18	-10	4

FEDERATION DIVISION FOUR FIRST GRADE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Fraser Park	7	6	1	0	18	4	14	19
Prairiewood United	7	5	2	0	23	11	12	17
Fairfield City Kings	8	4	3	1	15	5	10	15
Sydney Crescent Star	8	5	0	3	22	14	8	15
Nepean District	8	4	2	2	11	9	2	14
CSI Schofields	7	4	1	2	18	11	7	13
Holy Cross Ryde	7	3	1	3	13	12	1	10
Marrickville	7	2	2	3	17	14	3	8
St Josephs	6	1	3	2	9	13	4	6
Lithgow Workmen's	8	2	0	6	12	29	-17	6
Balmain Tigers	6	1	2	3	8	10	-2	5
United Eagles	7	1	2	4	11	18	-7	5
Springwood	5	1	0	4	8	18	-10	3
Earlwood Hermes	7	0	1	6	6	23	-17	1

SECOND GRADE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Fraser Park	6	4	2	0	14	6	8	14
Balmain Tigers	7	4	2	1	15	9	6	14
Prairiewood United	6	4	0	2	27	15	12	12
CSI Schofields	7	4	0	3	18	13	5	12
Nepean District	7	3	2	2	16	9	7	11
Holy Cross Ryde	7	3	2	2	14	8	6	11
St Josephs	7	3	1	3	16	14	2	10
Fairfield City Kings	7	3	1	3	15	14	1	10
Springwood	5	2	3	0	10	5	5	9
Earlwood Hermes	7	3	0	4	15	16	-1	9
Marrickville	7	2	1	4	11	13	-2	7
Lithgow Workmen's	7	2	0	5	9	20	-11	6
Sydney Crescent Star	7	2	0	5	15	29	-14	6
United Eagles	7	1	0	6	8	32	-24	3

FEDERATION DIVISION FIVE FIRST GRADE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
AVA United	6	4	0	2	19	8	11	12
Auburn Star	7	3	2	2	14	10	4	11
White Valley	7	3	2	2	11	10	1	11
Homenetmen	6	3	1	2	12	8	4	10
Bossy	7	2	4	1	15	14	1	10
Sporting SCC	8	2	3	3	13	17	-4	9
Eastern Creek Pioneer	4	2	2	0	7	5	2	8
Racing	7	0	5	2	8	10	-2	5
Liverpool Warriors	7	1	2	4	6	19	-13	5
Liverpool Olympic	8	0	4	4	10	14	-4	4
Kosciusko	5	3	1	1	12	12	0	3

FEDERATION DIVISION FIVE SECOND GRADE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
White Valley	7	6	0	1	215	8	17	18
Sporting SCC	7	6	0	1	20	5	16	18
AVA United	6	5	0	1	16	8	8	15
Eastern Creek Pioneer	4	4	0	0	17	8	9	12
Liverpool Olympic	8	3	2	3	15	12	3	11
Auburn Star	7	3	1	3	16	19	-3	10
Kosciusko	5	2	1	2	12	11	1	7
Racing	7	2	0	5	10	20	-10	6
Liverpool Warriors	7	1	1	5	7	15	-8	4
Homenetmen	6	0	1	5	8	21	-13	1
Bossy	6	0	0	6	2	22	-20	0

WOMEN'S STATE LEAGUE DIVISION ONE FIRST GRADE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Sutherland Sharks	7	6	1	0	23	4	19	19
NSW Inst/Academy	5	5	0	0	17	3	14	15
Marconi Fairfield	8	4	2	2	40	8	32	14
NNSW ITC/Academy	6	4	2	0	15	3	12	14
Sydney United	6	3	1	2	25	8	17	10
UWS Macarthur	8	3	0	5	18	23	-5	9
Gladesville Ravens	7	3	0	4	11	17	-6	9
Nepean Panthers	6	1	0	5	10	30	-20	3
Moorebank Sports	6	1	0	5	4	33	-29	3
Eastern Suburbs	7	0	0	7	5	39	-34	0

SECOND GRADE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Marconi Fairfield	8	5	2	1	21	6	15	17
Sutherland Sharks	7	5	0	2	34	9	25	15
NNSW ITC/Academy	6	5	0	1	25	6	19	15
Gladesville Ravens	7	4	1	1	18	8	10	13
Sydney United	6	4	0	2	24	7	17	12
Eastern Suburbs	7	3	2	2	12	5	7	11
NNSW Inst/Academy	5	2	0	3	19	10	9	6
Moorebank Sports	6	1	0	5	7	26	-19	3
Nepean Panthers	6	1	0	5	3	35	-32	3
UWS Macarthur	8	0	1	7	1	52	-51	1

WOMEN'S STATE LEAGUE DIVISION TWO

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Central Coast WSA	6	5	1	0	31	7	24	16
St George Assoc	6	5	1	0	24	3	21	16
Shoalhaven Assoc	6	4	2	0	22	5	17	14
Manly Warringah	7	4	1	2	16	16	1	13
Roselands	6	3	1	2	20	17	3	10
Bathurst City	8	2	2	4	17	19	-2	8
Sutherland Shire	7	2	0	5	19	28	-9	6
Gladesville Ravens	7	1	2	4	7	18	-11	5
Wollongong City	6	1	1	4	6	13	-7	4
Bankstown City	7	0	1	6	7	44	-37	1

NSW Soccer Federation

SUPER LEAGUE

Wednesday May 20 • Def. Rd 5
Parramatta Eagles v Central Coast
Melita Stadium — 7.30pm

Def. Rd 8
Macarthur Rams v Eastern Suburbs
Lynwood Park — 8.00pm

ROUND 12

Saturday May 23
Blacktown City v Ryde City
Gabbie Stadium — 7.00pm
Macarthur Rams v Sutherland Sharks
Lynwood Park — 6.00pm
Central Coast v Canterbury M/ville
Pluim Park — 6.00pm

Sunday May 24
Parramatta Eagles v St George Saints
Melita Stadium — 3.00pm
Leichhardt Tigers v Bonnyrigg W.E.
Lambert Park — 3.00pm
Bankstown City v Central Coast
Jensen Park — 3.00pm

SOCCER NSW INFORMATION SERVICE — 0055 22885
Max. call cost 75c/min — IDS
(Higher rate applies with mobile and public phones)

NNSW RESULTS ROUND 9

Hamilton	3	Cessnock	0
Edgeworth	3	Toronoto waba	2
Weston	5	Belmont Swansea	0
Highfields	5	Adamstown	1
Wallsend	3	Broadmeadow	1

Weathertex v Easts Maitland cancelled.

RESERVE GRADE

Cessnock	2	Hamilton	1
Toronto Awaba	6	Edgeworth	3
Belmont Swansea	0	Weston Workers	0
Highfields	1	Adamstown	0
Easts Maitland	1	Weathertex	0
Wallsend	5	Broadmeadow	2

UNDER U18

Hamilton	4	Cessnock	0
Edgeworth	1	Toronto Awaba	0
Weston	1	Belmont Swansea	0
Weathertex	1	Easts Maitland	1
Broadmeadow	1	Wallsend	1

DIV. TWO ROUND 9 FIRST GRADE

Thornton	1	Singleton	0
Phoenix	7	Mayfield	2
West Wallsend	9	Stockton	3
Budgewoi	3	Lambton	2
Pasminco	3	Tingira	1

Dudley Redhead v Beresfield cancelled.

RESERVE GRADE

Thornton	1	Singleton	0
Phoenix	2	Mayfield	1
West Wallsend	2	Stockton	2
Budgewoi	3	Lambton	0
Pasminco	5	Tingira	2

Dudley Redhead v Beresfield abandoned

UNDER 19's

Singleton	2	Thornton	2
Phoenix	3	Mayfield	2
West Wallsend	1	Stockton	1
Lambton	1	Budgewoi	0
Pasminco	3	Tingira	3
Dudley Redhead	6	Beresfield	0

NNSW NEWS

By Dane Skafte

Newcastle Breakers youth player Chris Tancheski looks certain to play in the senior squad for Newcastle in the 1998/99 Ericsson Cup competition.

Tancheski has been a member of the youth squad for the past season and has been one of the leading strikers in the league.

The 17-year-old signed a one year scholarship with the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) in Canberra earlier on this year.

Tancheski come under notice at last year's Under 16 state titles, after a German talent scout realised the potential of the young striker and make him a offer to trial in Europe.

"Several days later the (AIS) offered me a scholarship and when I had not heard from the overseas scout, I decided to except the offer from the AIS," Tancheski added.

One thing is for sure that the quietly spoken Merewether player will put the boots on for the Newcastle Breakers for at least the 1998-99 season.

★ ★ ★

Ken Kaiser Heads To France

NNSW Soccer Federation announced that their Manager of Coaching and Development, Ken Kaiser, had been appointed by Soccer Australia to the National (Australian) Technical Committee for the 1998 World Cup, joining Jim Selby, already in the Committee.

Garry Screen, Gen Man of NNSW Soc Fed, stated: The Federation is delighted that through its initiatives, Ken Kaiser will be attending the World Cup in France as a member of the National Technical Committee. The resultant gains from his experiences at the World Cup, will be of immeasurable value to Soccer, not only for Oceania and Australia but for the youth of Northern NSW.

"Both Jim Selby and Ken Kaiser have had extensive experience in organising and conducting study groups at previous Youth World Cups in Australia. They have also been Instructor Coaches in FIFA arranged courses throughout Oceania," added David Woolley, Chief Executive for Soccer Australia.

Ken Kaiser added: "By attending the World Cup and the matches selected, I will be able to asses the programs in place for our (NNSW) Federation players and coaches.

"I will be assessing the playing style, formations and practices of the elite national squads from around the world and will bring back not only to Soccer Australia but to NNSW, ways of improving soccer at the grass roots," he concluded.

ROUND 10 FIXTURES

Sat 23/5/98 Lambton Jaffas √ Singleton Strikers, Mayfield United v West Wallsend Bluebells.

Sun 24/5/98 Beresfield United v Phoenix Utd, Tingira Eagles v Dudley - Redhead Utd, Thornton Park v Lake Macquarie Roosters, Stockton Sharks √ Budgewoi Budgies.

Schools Development

Northern NSW Soccer Federation (NNSWSF) Development Officers, Bruce Tracey and Tracy Baker (on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday's) will visit schools around the Hunter during May.

Tracy Baker is a current member of the Northern NSW Women's Soccer Team and represented Australia at the Schoolgirls championships in the USA last year, where she was named player of the series.

SOCCER WEST COAST

Fremantle Move Clear

Fremantle City moved two points clear at the top of the West Australian Premiership at the weekend after downing Dianella White Eagles by five goals to one.

The win sent City clear of four other clubs that began the day on equal points.

Kingsway Olympic were of service to the side as the ground out an emphatic 2-0 win Floreat Athena with goals from two up-and-coming youngsters - Jamie Kosmanovich and Jamie Trandos, each netting one either side of the break.

Inglewood Falcons drew 1-1 Sorrento in a crunching match that wasn't for the faint-hearted. David Lee netted for the home with the equaliser coming from Lee Crosby.

Goalscorer Trim Morgan was again on target for Western Knights as they drew again Cockburn City, the equaliser being scored in the second-half.

Michael Vassailou made his debut, and scored, for Stirling Macedonia as strikers Rob Milveski and Dean Nicolau each found the net in the 3-3 draw with Joondalup City. Gary Murray scored a fine hat-trick and earned his side a share of the points.

Bayswater City were reduced to ten men early in their match with Perth but were able to hang on for a 0-0 draw and only their third point of the season.

But it was at Fremantle where the goals went flying in and the score could have been much larger after the visiting side hit the timber three times in the opening 20 minutes, even missing a penalty taken by Peter Murphy.

Outstanding midfielder Gary Faria tore up the defence in the 43rd minute to begin the goal-fest when firing home from 15 metres.

Scott Halpin, formerly of Perth Glory, came on in the 68th minute, when the score was at 3-1, but it was Michael Mirco who finished it all off with a goal on the stroke of full-time.

'Stan The Man' Plays A Blinder!

Stan 'The Man' Lazaridis played in an exhibition match in Perth and thoroughly enjoyed himself back on his old stomping ground as the West Ham Academy won 4-2 over the West Australian State team on Saturday night.

Lazaridis helped himself to a goal and played for over 50 minutes while showing off some of the skills and tricks that have been enjoyed by the London, and Australian, supporters this season.

WA opened the scoring when Scott Halpin finished off sweetly to find the net after only nine minutes.

Lazaridis excited the crowd and added the equaliser after 18 minutes before the young Aussie Richard Garcia, Lazaridis' West Ham team-mate and named 'Man of the Match' at the final whistle, profited from some nifty work out on the left to take the Academy into a 2-1 lead.

With eights to go before the break, it was again Halpin who found the net to level the scores once more but for good work by the Hammers keeper Phil Trianidis, formely of Cockburn, the score would have been more.

Garcia produced the pass that let Carl McDarby in to make it 3-2 and that man again, Trim Morgan, finished the scoring when Mike Harkness could only parry a McDarby penalty.

Lazaridis, although coming off in the 51st minute, was still signing autographs and giving interviews some 45 minutes AFTER the game had finished, proving what everyone knows, Stan is the perfect gentleman, has time for everyone and has never forgotten his roots.

'Stan the man' — you're a champion.

PREMIER LEAGUE

Round 7

Bayswater City Panthers	0	Perth	0
Stirling Macedonia	3	Joondalup City	3
Milovski, Yassiniou, Nicolaou		Murray 3	
Floreat Athena	0	Kinsway Olympic	2
		Kuzmanovich Trandos	
Sorrento	1	Inglewood Falcons	1
Lee		Crosby	
Dianella WE	1	Fremantle City	5
(not listed)		Surtees, Faria Mirco, Dyers, Kamara	
Western Knights	1	Cockburn City	1
Morgan		Wallace	

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Fremantle City	7	5	1	1	26	9	+17	16
Sorrento	7	4	2	1	23	10	+13	14
Inglewood Kiev	7	4	2	1	20	10	+10	14
Western Knights	7	4	2	1	20	12	+8	14
Floreat Athena	7	4	1	2	11	9	-2	13
Perth	7	2	3	2	5	6	-1	9
Joondalup City	7	2	2	3	10	20	-10	8
Cockburn City	7	2	1	4	8	12	-4	7
Kingsway Olympic	7	2	1	4	13	18	-5	7
Dianella WE	7	2	1	4	9	19	-10	7
Stirling Macedonia	7	1	1	5	10	25	-15	4
Bayswater City Pth	7	0	3	4	10	15	-5	3

DIVISION ONE

Queens Park	2	Southside Utd	1
Armadale	0	Rockingham City	2
Swan IC	1	Perth City*	1
Bassendean Cal	2	Stirling Suns	2
Ashfield/Bunbury	2	Balcatta	1
Nth Lake Espanol	1	Wanneroo City	2

(*Full title: Perth City/Leeming Strikers)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Ashfield/Bunbury	7	6	1	0	28	9	+19	19
Rockingham City	7	6	1	0	16	4	+12	19
Swan I.C.	7	5	1	1	23	9	+14	16
Queens Park	7	5	0	2	18	13	+5	15
Wanneroo City	7	4	1	2	20	13	+7	13
Balcatta	7	3	2	2	11	10	+1	11
Bassendean Cale	7	2	1	4	16	16	0	7
Southside United	7	2	0	5	5	19	-14	6
Stirling Suns	7	1	2	4	13	23	-10	5
Perth City	7	1	1	5	7	13	-6	4
North Lake Espanol	7	1	3	6	7	13	-6	3
Armadale	7	1	0	6	6	23	-17	3

WA AMATEUR & SOCIAL SOCCER ASSOCIATION

ROUND 5 - 17th May 1998

AUSTWEST HOMES - PREMIER DIVISION

Kwinana United	7	Morley Windmills	2 (2,3)
Shamrock Rovers	2	Sorrento Amateurs	1 (6,1)
Fremantle United	2	Forrestfield United	2 (5,0)
Murdoch University	9	WA Maccabi	2 (5,0)
Mandurah City	6	Beechboro White Eagles	1 (4,2)
Hamersley Rovers	2	Canning Langford	0 (3,3)

Reserves in brackets ()

OLA SPORTS COVER - DIVISION 1

Balga	1	Subiaco	5 (2,3)
Stirling Macedonia	4	Cloverdale Chindits	4 (3,2)
Naval Base Wescoa	2	Perth Azzurri	2 (4,3)
Spearwood Dalmatinac	3	Colo Colo	1 (1,1)
University Of WA	1	Belmont Villa	2 (7,0)
Joondalup City	0	South Perth United	1 (6,4)
Lynwood Chile	4	Perth Royals	0 (5,2)

OLA SPORTS COVER - DIVISION 2

Ballajura	5	Carlisle	4 (2,0)
Perth Entertainers	1	Willeton	3 (2,4)
Morley United	5	Rockingham City	1 (3,2)
Gosnells City	1	North Perth United	9 (0,6)
Yanchep	2	Cockburn United	3 (1,1)
North Beach	0	Rochester Amateurs	1 (2,2)

DIVISION 3

Burswood United	1	Floreat Athena	4 (1,4)
Balcatta Ilinden	3	Singleton Wanderers	3 (4,3)
Cockburn City	7	Stirling Panthers	1 (1,0)
Olympic Kingsway	6	Canning Suleymaniye	2 (1,7)
Calcio Rebels	1	Kingsley	2 (1,4)

LIFECARE - DIVISION 4

Ibero United	2	Bye	0 (2,0)
Morley Golden Lily	4	Curtin University	2 (1,10)
Stirling Pelister	0	Airport United	7 (1,5)
Mundaring	1	Perth International	3 (1,0)
Phoenix United	7	The Condores	1 (3,2)
Babylon United	4	Forrester United	1 (6,1)

OLA SPORTS COVER - PREMIER DIVISION SOCIAL

Ferndale Crusaders	5	Old Bailey Taverners	0
North Beach Cats	2	Bye	0
Gwelup Croatia	4	Q P Pioneers	3
Joondalup	2	St James Gate	2
Bye	0	Bassendean Caledonians	2
Shamrock Rovers	2	Willeton	6

OLA SPORTS COVER - SOCIAL DIVISION 1

Olympic Kingsway	0	Kelmscott Brewers	2
Rocky Rangers	6	Secret Harbour	0
Timor Oan	0	Alcoa	4
Kypros	2	Lynwood Colts	5
Uni Marys	2	Q P Social	3
Glendalough Gunners	4	Royal Perth Hospital	4

GLOBAL ONE - SOCIAL DIVISION 2

Murdoch University	2	Perth Royals	2
Kwinana United	1	White Eagles Serbia	1
Mandurah City	0	Manchester Utd Sup	2
Hamersley Rovers	1	Subiaco	2
Uni Real	1	Girrawheen	2
Fremantle United	0	North Perth United	3

PERTH GLORY - SOCIAL DIVISION 3

Inglewood Falcons	9	Morley Windmills	3
Ferndale Crusaders	3	Wembley Downs	2
Joondalup City	1	ECU Estudientes	9
Uwa Seacows	10	Saprissa	2
Wembley Nomads	3	Lynwood Colts	1
Canning Cosmos	3	Dacia Perth	3

PERTH GLORY - SOCIAL DIVISION 4

Fremantle United	1	Wanneroo City Social	9
QP Rangers	1	Path Panthers	8
XI Men In Flight	3	Curtin Podiatry	5
Saints	5	Sorrento Sands	0
Murdoch University	2	Kingsley	3
Naval Base Wescoa	4	Suitherlands Park	3

OLA SPORTS COVER - MASTERS DIVISION 1

Inglewood Falcons	4	Gosnells Ghosts	2
Rocky Rovers	2	Kingsley	4
Balga	3	Armadale	1
Perth City	7	Dame Gr Makedonia	1
Beldon		Canning Langford	

AUSTWEST HOMES - MASTERS DIVISION 2

Hammersly Rovers	3	Subiaco	1
Ashfield Dynamos	5	Whitford City	1
Murdoch University	0	Wembley Downs	5
Morley City	5	Cloverdale Chindits	8
Perth City	3	Forrestfield United	1

MASTERS DIVISION 3

Ferndale Crusaders	3	Kelmscott Brewers	3
North Lake	2	Kingsley	2
North Perth Celtic	2	Bye	0
Sorrento Bobs2Path Panthers	0		
Joondalup City	0	Forrestfield United	2
Mandurah City	2	Melville City	3

ACCESS HOME LOANS - MASTERS DIVISION 4

Canning Cosmos	2	Melville City	0
Balga	4	South Perth United	3
Mundaring	4	Wembley Downs	0
Sorrento 45s	0	Armadale	5

QUIT - METROPOLITAN COLTS

Ballajura	3	Fremantle City	1
Hamersley Rovers	5	Kingsley	1
Shamrock Rovers	18	Beechboro W E	0

South Australia

Results/Tables

STATE LEAGUE - RD 9

West Adelaide	P	Adelaide City	P
Adelaide Hills	1	Western Strikers	0
Callisto			
Para Hills Knights	1	Adelaide Cobras	2
Hirons		Falidis, Economou	
Modbury	1	Salisbury Utd	0
Isaccson			
Enfield City	3	Seaford	1
Musci		Huybregts	
Salvatore 2			
Port Pirie City	2	Noarlunga	2
Kavacevic		Paterson	
Corrieri		Longshaw	

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts	Ded
Modbury	9	6	2	1	20	8	12	20	0
Enfield	9	6	2	1	16	8	8	20	0
West Adel	8	5	2	1	18	10	8	17	0
Ad Cobras	9	4	2	3	15	15	0	14	0
Para Hills	9	4	1	4	16	15	1	13	0
Port Pirie	9	3	2	4	24	20	4	11	0
Noarlunga	9	3	2	4	13	16	-3	11	0
Adel City	8	3	1	4	15	14	1	10	0
Western	9	2	4	3	11	12	-1	10	0
Ad Hills	9	3	1	5	15	22	-7	10	0
Seaford	9	3	0	6	15	23	-8	9	0
Salisbury	9	1	1	7	7	22	-15	4	0

U/23 GRADE

West Adelaide	P	Adelaide City	P
Adelaide Hills	0	Western Strikers	3
Para Hills Knights	1	Adelaide Cobras	5
Modbury	0	Salisbury Utd	1
Enfield City	0	Seaford	1
Port Pirie City	1	Noarlunga	2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts	Ded
Noarlunga	7	6	0	1	13	7	6	18	0
Salisbury	8	5	1	2	21	14	7	16	0
Ad Cobras	8	5	0	3	20	17	3	15	0
Western	7	4	0	3	14	11	3	12	0
Seaford	8	3	2	3	17	15	2	11	0
Enfield	7	3	1	3	10	11	-1	10	0
Modbury	7	3	0	4	14	8	6	9	0
Para Hills	8	2	2	4	13	19	-6	8	0
Port Pirie	7	1	2	4	9	16	-7	5	0
Ad Hills	7	0	2	5	5	18	-13	2	0

U/19 GRADE

West Adelaide	P	Adelaide City	P
Adelaide Hills	1	Western Strikers	1
Para Hills Knights	3	Adelaide Cobras	0
Modbury	2	Salisbury Utd	2
Enfield City	2	Seaford	2
Port Pirie City	2	Noarlunga	5

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts	Ded
Noarlunga	7	5	2	0	21	8	13	17	0
Ad Hills	7	4	3	0	16	6	10	15	0
Para Hills	8	5	0	3	22	14	8	15	0
Modbury	7	4	2	1	17	11	6	14	0
Salisbury	8	4	2	2	14	14	0	14	0
Enfield	7	3	1	3	12	12	0	10	0
Western	7	2	3	2	15	12	3	9	0
Seaford	8	2	1	5	12	21	-9	7	0
Port Pirie	7	1	0	6	9	16	-7	3	0
Ad Cobras	8	0	0	8	0	24	-24	0	0

Soccer Canberra

UNIT 2/3 PHIPPS CLOSE, DEAKIN, ACT. 2600 PH: 06 260 4000 FAX: 06 260 4999

Information Line: 1902 220 074 (Calls charged at 50c min – higher rates for mobile public telephones)
Internet Home Page HTTP: www.ACTSF.ORC.AU

By Graham Cooke

DUKIC SLIPS OUT

One of ACT soccer's best known players, Stan Dukic, has left Canberra, apparently for good.

His departure has stunned officials of Canberra Deakin, the club he played for during most of his 20 years in ACT senior soccer.

One said soccer and the club had filled much of Dukic's time. "His recreational and social life revolved around the sport and the Croatian community generally, it is difficult to imagine them apart," he said.

"I believe he has gone to live near his mother on the Gold Coast." Deakin coach Marko Vrkic said Dukic had played his last game against Belconnen United a fortnight ago. He had been sent-off and had received a two-match suspension.

"It is a shame he has gone like this, he deserved something better." A talented midfielder with an electrifying burst of speed in his younger days, Dukic was playing senior first grade soccer on the NSW South Coast at the age of 13 before Deakin brought him to Canberra.

A year later he was playing in the ACT Premier League, one of the youngest to do so. He was a major figure in the powerful Deakin team of the mid 1980s - one that would almost certainly have dominated the competition had it not been for the even stronger Juventus.

He spent just one season away from the club - in 1987 when he represented Monaro in the NSW Super League. But a year later Deakin was in that competition on its own account and he returned to reclaim his place in the side.

Stan Dukic

It was Dukic's misfortune his best soccer years coincided with the nine seasons Canberra was absent from the national league, but he did claim a place in the first Canberra Cosmos line-up, and performed credibly enough, mainly coming off the substitutes' bench.

Off the field he was often controversial, and only last September drew flack from Soccer Canberra officials for his public condemnation of the poor quality of pitches provided for the Premier League finals series.

Dukic's departure further reduces the survivors of Deakin's years in the NSW Superleague, which ended in 1994, but Vrkic is hoping he can tempt another, defender Luciano Fabritzio, into returning.

"Luche has increased family commitments, but he has told me he will be back at some stage," the coach said.

That will be a major plus for Deakin, especially as the man currently anchoring the club's defence, Mladin Rogic, has indicated he would prefer to take the season off to deal with increasing work demands.

NO WAY BACK FOR FORMER STARS

There is still no way back for former Canberra Rockets stars Steve and Martin Lazzari and Steve Vanzetti after the squad was picked for games against the Olyroos and Illawarra over the next month.

The trio has not been selected, although coach Ian Heywood agrees that in different circumstances they would probably all be in his starting line-up.

However, Heywood is sticking to the strict 'no train, no play' regime he announced when taking over from Walter Valeri.

The Lazzaris, from Weston Creek Royals, and Vanzetti (Canberra Olympic) were all members of the squad Heywood inherited from Valeri for the match against touring Shanghai Xu Fang, but he dropped them after they missed a training session. The Rockets then went on to beat Xu Fang 6-2.

He insists the door is still open. "If they were to give me a call and say 'yes there was a misunderstanding, but I am really keen to play', then that would be a start," he said.

"But I haven't heard from them so I have to assume they are not worried whether they play or not. Obviously, I don't want people with that attitude. It is really up to them."

He will even extend the ruling to Canberra Cosmos players Ilija Prenzoski and Peter Buljan who missed the first training session of the new squad after sending a message saying they were injured.

"They are in against the Olyroos purely because it will enhance their own chances of getting into the Olympic squad," Heywood said. "But if they don't want to come along, then there are plenty who do."

A major surprise is the dropping of the Gungahlin Juventus pair of Gabbi Exposito and Pedro Pavez. Exposito has not even been named in the train-on squad for the Young Rockets, despite still being under the maximum age.

Canberra Rockets: Blair Machin, Geoff Howarth, Adrian Dowling (Belconnen United), Stephen Wilkinson (Weston Creek), Alex Tsiokos, George Cattanach, Paul Gagetti, Scott Conlon (Gungahlin Juventus), Njegosh Popovich, Marcello Fernandez, Elliott Zwangobani (Canberra Olympic), Shane Lyons, Ilija Prenzoski, Peter Buljan (Capital City Suns), Joe Gagetti, John Rakic, Jimmy Baxter (Monaro).

VALERI HITS OUT AFTER ZEBRAS LOSE

Gungahlin Juventus coach Walter Valeri sampled defeat for the first time since taking over when his team was beaten 1-0 by Belconnen United in the ACT Premier League — and it left a bitter taste in his mouth.

The normally mild-mannered team boss clashed twice with referee Ben Williams, the second time earning a stern ticking off from the match official.

Afterwards Valeri said he had been incensed by a fifth-minute incident behind play in which Juventus defender Alex Tsiokos lay sprawled on the ground after an apparent clash with Marko Perinovic.

That earned the Belconnen striker a caution, but Valeri said Perinovic had done enough in the first half to earn a send-off. "He can be a law unto himself, charging into players without looking at the ball, but he generally seems to escape any sanctions," the coach said.

"Coaches and other players are getting sick of it.

"In some ways I have a lot of time for Marko, he's a good old-fashioned centre-forward who loves to score, but when all is said and done, we have to go to work in the morning, and no-one wants to get injured unnecessarily."

In fact it was a far from happy afternoon for the big striker, who found himself engaged in a constant duel with the doggedly persistent Tsiokos. There were few openings, the closest being a header into the side netting, until a 66th minute penalty kick, but although he hit the ball hard enough, goalkeeper Pedro Pavez guessed the direction and made a fine save; five minutes later Perinovic was substituted.

The second incident which had Valeri on his feet came in stoppage time as Juventus desperately sought an equaliser. The coach said that Lou Gasperi had been held on the ground after getting round an opponent and should have received a penalty. Gaspari got the ball away to Brad Smith, but the flame-haired young substitute shot just wide of the upright.

"I know I'm probably going to get into trouble over this, but some referees in Canberra ought to be taking a long, hard look at themselves," Valeri said.

Even so, Juventus would have been very fortunate to have extracted points from this game. It did not get a shot on goal until four minutes before half-time, while Belconnen bombarded its opponent almost without respite.

Deep, disciplined defence served the Zebras well until the first minutes of the second half when Matt Whyte's pass to Scott Manson got him in behind the backline to shoot past Pavez.

Second-placed Monaro dropped a point in a 2-2 draw with Capital City Suns. It could have been worse for Monaro when Suns' veteran striker Tony Lemezina broke through with goalkeeper Tony Gaurino to beat — he hesitated and the ball was scrambled clear.

Canberra Olympic looked doomed for its second loss of the season when it trailed Canberra Deakin 2-0 with 10 minutes left, but an extraordinary come-back through an own-goal and two strikes from Marcello Fernandez, saw Olympic snatch all three points and stay in touch in third place.

There was another 2-2 draw at the University of Canberra, where the home side twice came from behind against Weston Creek Royals. Creek coach Jimmy Bland, without a win in three games, said his team was having problems penetrating the final third of the field.

The Lazzari brothers, Steve and Martin, scored the Creek's goal; the University hit back with strikes from Andy Mack and Josh Carmichael, who coach Tony Olivera described as putting in an "heroic" performance.

And five games into the season Canberra City has gained its first points — enough to lift it above the team it beat, Queanbeyan City. Veteran Ian Shaw, Solomon islander Peter Usmae, Mikey Katz (penalty) and Tony Bufalo were City's scorers; Lazar Simeonov and Yuki Onda replied for Queanbeyan.

Delighted Canberra coach Steve Bryant said it was important the breakthrough had come. "We are a young side, and I sensed the players were getting dispirited," he said.

"But with this win our confidence will build.

"Now everyone's looking forward to our Federation Cup tie with Capital City Suns on Wednesday night."

TEA'S UP AT BELNORTH

Parents who have shivered their way though wintry Saturdays at Belnorth's Giralang ground will appreciate the new canteen facilities, which will be officially opened on May 30.

The canteen is far bigger than the original, which now reverts to its initial role as a changing room for the Junior League club.

Canteen coordinator Sam Yarnold said the additional space is needed to cope with the 850 young players who pass through Giralang at various times on a Saturday.

However, one thing will not change — Sam's starting time of 7.30am in order that the canteen is ready to serve the first players and their parents at 9am.

The opening ceremony will be performed by the club's patron, the President of the Federal Senate, Margaret Reid.

IEA Federation Cup Semi-Finals

(At Greenway Oval, Tuggeranong: Wed May 20)

Canberra Olympic	v	Belconnen United	6pm
Canberra City	v	Capital City Suns	8pm

NOVELL ACT P/L

Division 1 - Round 6 - Sunday May 24

Weston Creek Royals	v	Belconnen Utd	Woden Park
Gungahlin Juventus	v	Canberra City	Jamison Oval
Queanbeyan City	v	Canberra Deakin	High Street
Canberra Olympic	v	Monaro	O'Connor Oval
Uni of Canberra	v	Capital City Suns	University Oval

Under 23s noon. Firsts 2pm

Division 2 - Round 7: Saturday May 23

Defence Academy	v	O'Connor Knights	Addison Rd
ANU	v	White Eagles	ANU
Burns Club	v	Tuggeranong Utd	Kambah 2 Oval (1)
Canberra Defence	v	Cooma	RMC Oval

Under 23s 1pm. Firsts 3pm

Division One

Belconnen United	1	Gungahlin Juventus	0
Canberra City	4	Queanbeyan City	2
Canberra Deakin	2	Canberra Olympic	3
Uni of Canberra	2	Weston Creek Royals	2
Monaro	2	Capital City Suns	2

	P	W	SD	D	L	F	A	Pts
Belconnen	5	5	0	0	0	11	5	15
Monaro	5	2	3	0	0	13	6	12
Canberra Oly	5	3	1	0	1	13	9	11
Capital City	5	2	2	0	1	14	12	10
Gungahlin	5	2	1	0	2	7	6	8
Weston Creek	5	2	1	0	2	8	10	8
Canberra Deakin	5	1	2	0	2	6	7	7
Uni of Canberra	5	0	2	0	3	10	17	4
Canberra City	5	1	0	0	4	8	12	3
Queanbeyan	5	1	0	0	4	13	19	3

Under 23:

Belconnen United 0 Gungahlin Juventus 2, Canberra City 1 Queanbeyan City 1, Canberra Deakin 2 Canberra Olympic 0, Uni of Canberra 3 Weston Creek Royals 2, Monaro 3 Capital City Suns 2.

Points: Gungahlin Juventus 15, Queanbeyan City 11, Canberra Deakin 11, Canberra City 10, University of Canberra 9, Belconnen United 8, Capital City Suns 5, Weston Creek Royals 5, Monaro 5, Canberra Olympic 0.

Youth League:

Belconnen United 1 Gungahlin Juventus 1, Canberra City 6 Queanbeyan City 0, Canberra Deakin 1 Tuggeranong United 1, Radford 3 Goulburn City 2, University of Canberra 10 Canberra Olympic 1, Weston Creek Royals 4 St Edmunds 0, Capital City Suns 3 Belconnen Strikers 2.

Points: Belconnen United 14, Radford 11, Weston Creek Royals 9, Canberra Deakin 8, Capital City Suns 8, University of Canberra 8, Gungahlin Juventus 7, St Edmunds 6, Belconnen Strikers 6, Canberra City 5, Tuggeranong United 4, Goulburn City 3, Queanbeyan City 0, Canberra Olympic 0.

Division Two

O'Connor Knights	1	White Eagles	0
Defence Academy	2	Tuggeranong United	3
ANU	2	Cooma	2

	P	W	SD	D	L	F	A	Pts
White Eagles	5	4	0	0	1	17	5	12
ANU	4	3	1	0	0	14	6	11
Burns Club	4	3	1	0	0	13	7	11
O'Connor Knights	4	2	2	0	0	7	5	10
Cooma	5	2	1	0	2	17	12	8
Tuggeranong United	5	1	1	0	3	7	20	5
Defence Academy	5	1	0	0	4	3	16	3
Canberra Defence	3	0	0	0	3	1	8	0

Reserves:

Defence Academy 2 Tuggeranong United 2, ANU 7 Cooma 1.

ACT State League: Division 1:

Belconnen United 0 Belwest 0, Canberra City 0 ANU 8, Goulburn City 1 University of Canberra 4, Monaro 2 Ginninderra 4, Blue Light 0 Calwell 5.

Division 2:

Burns Colts 0 Belwest 2, Canberra City 0 ANU I 2, Burns Club 1 University of Canberra 2, ANU II 0 Ginninderra 3, Gungahlin Juventus 1 Defence Academy 2.

Division 3:

Canberra City 1 ANU 4, University of Canberra 0 Weston Creek Royals 6, Fyshwick 4 University of Canberra 0, Burns Masters 4 Belwest 4.

Division 4:

Trojans 3 ANU 0, University of Canberra 1 Weston Creek Royal 0, Blue Light 2, Harmonie 7.

Masters:

Canberra City 5 Belwest 1

Victorian Soccer Federation

FAWKNER 0 GREEN GULLY 1

By John Rigas

Green Gully toppled leauge leaders Fawkner Blues 1-0 in an exciting contest at Smith Reserve on Friday night in where the Cavaliers were the classier outfit.

Many changes have occured since Andrew Marth's appointment as coach, in have come Levent Osman (Gippsland Falcons), John Didulica (Melbourne Knights) and Robert Markovac (China), all three players have added another dimension to Gully's performances.

All three played a major part in the victory over Fawkner along with youngster John Kindtner.

Cavs striker Daniel Genovesi scored the sole goal in the game after 27 minutes of play.

Genovesi headed the ball past goalkeeper Maurice Gonzalez after the keeper's attempted clearance was intercepted.

Green Gully dominated the first-half and three minutes later Markovac had his shot cleared off the goaline by Tony Schipano.

Gully continued to apply the pressure with Cameron Brown heading against the post after 32 minutes.

The visitors should have increased their lead when a close-range effort by Markovac was put wide.

Green Gully have now won two games on the trot and another new signing is on the cards with Ante Kovacevic from Melbourne Knights expected to wear the green and white jersey soon.

Blues: Gonzalez, Tramontana, Di Sauro, Deak, Schipano, V. Ferrante, De Santis, Biskic (K.Simsek), Emmanuele (T.Simsek), Duzel, Kelic.

Cavaliers: Vella, Spiteri, Osman, Mangos, Didulica (Douglas), Papadopoulos, Brown, Kindtner, Markovac, Donev, Genovesi.

Votes: 3- Didulica (GG), 2- Kindtner (GG), 1- Markovac (GG).

LEADING SCORERS

15	Karl (St Albans Saints)
13	Becvinovski (Altona Magic)
11	Gnjidic (Bulleen Inter Kings)
	Markovski (Preston Lions)
10	Emmanuele (Fawkner Blues)
9	Corallo (South Dandenong)
	Cuculevski (Thomastown Zebras)
8	Lazarevski (Thomastown Zebras)
7	Papettas (Bentleigh Greens)
	Papadopoulos (Green Gully Cavaliers)
	R.Mezensof (South Dandenong)

LEADING VOTES

17	Emmanuele (Fawkner Blues)
	Becvinovski (Altona Magic)
16	Gnjidic (Bulleen Inter Kings)
	Magnacca (Sunshine Georgies)
15	Karl (St Albans Saints)
14	Cuculevski (Thomastown Zebras)
11	Fak (Altona Magic)
	Emsovski (Preston Lions)
	Field (Sunshine Georgies)
	Jolevski (Thomastown Zebras)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
St Albans Saints	16	11	2	3	34	18	35
Fawkner Blues	16	10	3	3	27	15	33
Altona Magic	16	10	2	4	25	13	32
Port Melbourne Sharks	15	8	2	5	25	16	26
Bulleen Inter Kings	15	6	7	2	20	13	25
Sunshine Georgies	16	7	2	7	19	24	23
Preston Lions	16	7	1	8	29	23	22
Green Gully Cavaliers	16	6	3	7	27	24	21
Thomastown Zebras	16	6	3	7	27	25	21
Springvale White Eagles	16	6	2	8	17	25	20
Bentleigh Greens	16	5	5	6	17	25	20
Moorabbin City	16	4	3	9	18	30	15
South Dandenong	16	3	3	10	25	38	12
Heidelberg United	16	1	4	11	17	38	7

BENTLEIGH 1 ST ALBANS 3

By Dwyght Tuffnell

St Albans Saints climbed to top of the Premier League ladder with a 3-1 victory over Bentleigh Greens on Saturday.

League leading scorer Hrvoje Karl scored another two goals to take his tally for the season to 15.

He gave the Saints the lead in the 23rd minute, thanks to a goalkeeping error from Glenn Clarke.

Clarke received a back-pass but then miskicked to Karl who was inside the area and had the simple task of prodding the ball past a furious Clarke.

Eight minutes later the Greens were on level terms.

Sonny Sevin and Juan Nilo, who were signed during the week, combined to set up Zoran Todorovski to fire a left foot shot beyond Ivan Kozic and into the net.

Just two minutes afterwards though, St Albans were back in front.

Slavko Rados' corner was flicked on to the back post where Kon Sianidis knocked the ball in.

The second-half was all St Albans and they wrapped up the three points with another Karl goal in the 73rd minute.

Rados played a part again, firing in a free-kick that Clarke could only parry. Karl was on the scene quickly to tap the loose bal in.

Green: Clarke, Karapatsos, Micheil, McDonagh, Constantinou, Drakos, Hastie, Sevin (Van Egmond), Nilo, Todorovski (Papettas), Charalambous (Kourkoutzelos).

Saints: I.Kozic, Magdic, Cuze, Vukadin, Karl, Pelja (Kirishian), Sianidis, Razov, S.Rados, Raspudic (I.Rados), Silic (J.Kozic).

Votes: 3- Razov (StA), 2- S.Rados (StA), 1- Karl (StA)

SPRINGVALE WE 0 PRESTON 3

By Milan Ninovic

Preston Lions are inching closer to the top five after another impressive victory, this time over Springvale White Eagles.

It was 3-0 but had it not been for Robert Brian in the White Eagles goal, the margin would have been greater.

Nick Radecki started it off in the seventh minute, firing in from close-range after being set up by Joe Tricarico following his initial shot which had hit the post.

A mistake by White Eagles defender Mariano Calomino gave Preston their second goal in the 22nd minute.

Calomino's back pass was seized by Sash Markovski and he went round Brian and shot in from an angle.

Radecki scored again in the 57th minute beating Brian with a low shot after being sent clear by Tony Sterjovski's terrific through ball.

White Eagles midfielder Sasa Nikolic was sent-off in the 66th minute after a tackle from behind on Preston's Anthony Burlak.

Brian kept out Preston for the rest of the game and even saved a penalty in the 75th minute.

Calomino had brought down Tricarico but Chris Emsovski's spot-kick was well dealt with by Brian.

White Eagles: Brian, Wallace, M.Marinkovic, Calomino, Culibrk, Styczen, V.De La Plaza, Rikanovic (Gacovski), Nikolic, Craciun (M.Burlak), Di Iorio.

Lions: Acevski, Lisolajski, A.Burlak, Radecki (Talevski), Filipovski, Ivanov, Emsovski, Tricarico, Smirnis, Sterjovski (Slavevski;Chiodo), Markovski.

Votes: 3- A.Burlak (PL), 2- Brian (SWE), 1- Radecki (PL)

ALTONA 4 MOORABBIN 1

By John Rigas

Altona Magic produced a second half onslaught to destroy the lowly Moorabbin City 4-1 at Paisley Park on Saturday afternoon.

Altona's young striker Zoran Petrevski opened the scoring after 22 minutes when he beat Moorabbin goalkeeper Bruce McLaren from inside the six yard box.

City worried the Magic when they scored an equaliser through David Costa after Steve Marley provided the midfielder with a great ball.

Vasko Trpcevski gave Altona the lead again after 67 minutes when he produced a shot from the acutest of angles, right on the byline.

Altona's leading goalscorer Sash Becvinovski scored Altona's third, after he latched onto a flick on, Becvinovski easily taped the ball into the goal.

Trpcevski scored his second late in the game after he headed in after a Becvinovski cross.

Moorabbin coach Michael Lynn mentioned it was a good team effort from his players.

Magic: McGrath, Tasevski, Velkovski, Markovski, Fak, Runje, Georgopoulos (Rusmir), Micevski, Trpcevski, Petrevski (Cergovski), Becvinovski.

City: McLaren, Marley, Armour, Graham, Jackson (Norton), Davie, Leopold, Colosimo, Durand (McMullen), Scrobogna (Hanna), Costa.

Votes: 3-Trpcevski (AM), 2-Becvinovski (AM), 1-Fak (AM).

SUNSHINE 1 HEIDELBERG 1

By George Koukeris

As the Premier League enters the home straight former giants Heidelberg United are struggling to avoid relegation.

A recent influx of national league players hasn't had an initial affect, and it continued on Saturday when they drew 1-1 away to Sunshine Georgies.

After 15 rounds they sit last and trail South Dandenong, in 13th spot by five points.

The Bergers wasted no time displaying their improvement. Midfielders Kon Harbis and Zlatko Mihajlovic claimed full control in the centre to create tension for the Georgies early on.

Quick moves and dashing pace by the forward line contributed to keeping Georgies keeper Tony Calleja well occupied.

The breaks were occured in the 21st minute as George Georgiadis was awarded a free kick for Brandon Vassallo's attempt at an interception.

Georgiadis' cannon-ball shot soared over the wall and fell perfectly into the net to register his first goal of the year.

Fifteen minutes later it all turned sour as Mihajlovic was given a red card for his callous attempt to stop John Kanesoulis on the right wing.

After half-time the Georgies reversed the play from the first half. The advantage of an extra man helped level the score in the 51st minute.

Brandon Vassallo picked up a loose ball in front of goal to thunder in.

Four minutes later the match turned again with another player sent-off.

Michael Branov let his temper get the better of him and bring the Georgies down to ten men.

Georgies: Calleja, Trpcevski (Stojanovski), Kanesoulis, Krajacic, De Bono, Gurpinar, Field, Branov, Vassallo, Dragicevic, Magnacca.

United: Jevdjevic, Grigorakis (Vouloumanos), Anastasiou, Georgiadis, Hasler (Medjedovic), Canosa, Cutillo (Stefanidis), Tsekinis, Duric, Harbis, Mihajlovic.

Votes: 3- Harbis (HU), 2- Tsekinis (HU), 1- Magnacca (SG).

CRAZY JOHN'S MOBILEWORLD COMMUNICATIONS

DIVISION ONE

Ringwood City	2	Springvale City	2
Western Suburbs	10	Melton Reds	1
North Geelong Warriors	0	Northcote City	0
Richmond	2	Kingston City	0
Doncaster Rovers	3	Werribee City	2
Altona East	2	Westgate	1
Lalor United	0	Westvale	5

Table - Westvale 22, Altona East 20, Western Suburbs 13, Westgate 13, Kingston City 13, Northcote City 13, Werribee City 12, Doncaster Rovers 11, Richmond 11, Springvale City 10, Ringwood City 10, North Geelong Warriors 5, Lalor United 2, Melton Reds -3.

ROUND 9 FIXTURES
Sunday May 24

Westvale v North Geelong Warriors
Westgate v Lalor United
Werribee City v Altona East
Kingston City v Doncaster Rovers
Melton Reds v Richmond
Ringwood City v Western Suburbs
Springvale City v Northcote City

DIVISION TWO

Melbourne City	3	Frankston Strikers	0
Knox City	1	Yarraville/Glen Eira	5
Mooroolbark	0	Altona City	1
Old Scotch Waverley	6	Essendon Bruns. Royals	1
Maroondah Arrows	0	Oakleigh	0
Regent Bulla	0	East Richmond	0
Broadmeadows City	3	Cranbourne	2

Table - Oakleigh 20, Yarraville/Glen Eira 18, Knox City 16, Frankston Strikers 14, Altona City 14, Old Scotch Waverley 13, Melbourne City 11, East Richmond 10, Regent Bulla 10, Broadmeadows City 9, Maroondah Arrows 7, Essendon Bruns. Royals 6, Cranbourne 4, Mooroolbark 2.

ROUND 9 FIXTURES
Saturday May 23

Cranbourne v Altona City
East Richmond v Broadmeadows City
Maroondah Arrows v Regent Bulla
Oakleigh v Old Scotch Waverley
Yarraville/Glen Eira v Essendon Bruns. Royals
Frankston Strikers v Knox City
Melbourne City v Mooroolbark

DIVISION THREE

South Werribee	2	Frankston Pines	1
Stonnington City	7	Pascoe Vale	2
Geelong	2	Fitzroy City	1
Banyule City	5	Chelsea	0
Keysborough	4	Bell Park	2
North Coburg United	0	Diamond Valley United	0
Keilor Park	0	South Springvale	1

Table - Geelong 22, Stonnington City 19, Diamond Valley United 17, Frankston Pines 15, South Springvale 14, South Werribee 10, North Coburg United 9, Keilor Park 9, Keysborough 8, Fitzroy City 7, Pascoe Vale 6, Chelsea 6, Bell Park 5, Banyule City 5.

ROUND 9 FIXTURES
Saturday May 23

South Springvale v Fitzroy City
Diamond Valley United v Keilor Park
Bell Park v North Coburg United
Chelsea v Keysborough
Pascoe Vale v Banyule City
Frankston Pines v Stonnington City
South Werribee v Geelong

DIVISION FOUR

Clifton Hill United	3	South Caulfield	0
Moreland City	0	Sunbury United	0

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Victorian Soccer Federation

Corio	0	Seaford United	0
Western Eagles	0	Williamstown	3
Nunawading City	1	Geelong Rangers	3
Melton	0	South Wantirna	4
Langwarrin	3	Sandringham City	1

Table - Moreland City 22, Williamstown 21, Seaford United 19, Corio 17, Langwarrin 16, South Wantirna 14, Geelong Rangers 13, Sandringham City 11, Sunbury United 9, Melton 7, Western Eagles 5, Clifton Hill United 3, Nunawading City 1, South Caulfield 0.

ROUND 9 FIXTURES
Saturday May 23

Sandringham City v Seaford United
South Wantirna v Langwarrin
Geelong Rangers v Melton
Williamstown v Nunawading City
Sunbury United v Western Eagles
South Caulfield v Moreland City
Clifton Hill United v Corio

PROVISIONAL LEAGUE DIVISION 1

Lalor	4	Croxton Park	2
Springvale Condors	1	North Sunshine Eagles	2
Templestowe Eagles	1	Monbulk	0
Riversdale	3	Brandon Park	0
Endeavour United	3	Lyndale United	0
Glenroy	2	Mitcham United	3

Table - Lalor 16, Lyndale United 14, Croxton Park 11, North Sunshine Eagles 10, Endeavour United 9, Riversdale 9, Mitcham United 9, Glenroy 7, Springvale Condors 6, Templestowe Eagles 5, Monbulk 3, Brandon Park 1.

ROUND 9 FIXTURES
Saturday May 23

Lyndale United v Glenroy
Brandon Park v Endeavour United
Monbulk v Riversdale
North Sunshine Eagles v Templestowe Eagles
Croxton Park v Springvale Condors
Mitcham United - bye
Lalor - bye

DIVISION TWO

Dingley City	0	Morwell Pegasus	3
Braeside United	0	Dandenong	3
Newborough/Yallourn	5	Berwick City	0
Ashburton	1	Monash University	0
Doveton	2	Waverley Wanderers	0
Noble Park	4	Old Camberwell Gram.	1

Table - Waverley Wanderers 15, Doveton 14, Morwell Pegasus 13, Newborough/Yallourn 12, Dandenong 12, Monash University 10, Noble Park 9, Ashburton 3, Braeside United 2, Old Camberwell Gram. 2, Dingley City 1, Berwick City 0.

ROUND 7 FIXTURES
Saturday May 23

Old Camberwell Gram. v Newborough/Yallourn
Doveton v Noble Park
Monash University v Waverley Wanderers
Dandenong v Ashburton
Dingley City v Braeside United
Morwell Pegasus v Berwick City

DIVISION 2 NTH/WEST/CENTRAL

Keon Park	2	Melbourne University	0
Elwood City	5	Meadow Park	2
Uni. of Melbourne	0	South Yarra	1
La Trobe University	1	Ballarat	2
Broadmeadows United	6	Hoppers Crossing	2
Brunswick City	2	Sydenham Park	2

Table - South Yarra 16, Brunswick City 13, Melbourne University 10, Sydenham Park 9, Uni. of Melbourne 9, Keon Park 8, Ballarat 8, Meadow Park 6, Broadmeadows United 5, Elwood City 5, Hoppers Crossing 4, La Trobe University 1.

ROUND 7 FIXTURES
Saturday May 23

Sydenham Park v South Yarra
Hoppers Crossing v Brunswick City
Broadmeadows United v La Trobe University
Meadow Park v Ballarat
Melbourne University v Elwood City
Keon Park v Uni. of Melbourne

DIVISION 3 STH/EAST/CENTRAL

Ivanhoe United	2	Flemington Falcons	1
Noble Park United	0	Clayton Inter	2
Thornbury United	2	Dandenong Inter	3
North Caulfield	1	Heatherton United	2
Collingwood City	7	Parkmore	3
Caulfield United	0	Endeavour Hills	1

Table - Clayton Inter 13, Dandenong Inter 13, North Caulfield 12, Heatherton United 11, Flemington Falcons 10, Caulfield United 10, Noble Park United 8, Ivanhoe United 7, Endeavour Hills 6, Thornbury United 4, Collingwood City 3, Parkmore 0.

ROUND 7 FIXTURES
Sunday May 24

Endeavour Hills v Dandenong Inter
Parkmore v Caulfield United
Heatherton United v Collingwood City
Clayton Inter v North Caulfield
Flemington Falcons v Noble Park United
Ivanhoe United v Thornbury United

DIVISION 3 NTH/WEST

West Preston	1	Brimbank	5
Whittlesea United	0	Somerton City	1
Keilor United	2	Watsonia Heights	0
Mill Park	2	Northern United	0
Darebin United	2	North Glenroy	0
North Reservoir		bye	

Table - Somerton City 18, Mill Park 10, Darebin United 9, Brimbank 9, Northern United 7, North Glenroy 5, North Reservoir 5, West Preston 5, Watsonia Heights 4, Keilor United 1, Whittlesea United -1.

ROUND 7 FIXTURES
Sunday May 24

North Glenroy v Watsonia Heights
North Reservoir v Darebin United
Somerton City v Mill Park
Brimbank v Whittlesea United
West Preston v Keilor United
Northern United - bye

VICTORIAN CHURCHES SOCCER ASSOCIATION

Junior Results — Under 8 - Round 3

Ashburton All Stars	1	Nth Blackburn Eagles	1
Ashburton Panthers	1	Ashburton Dynamos	3
Eltham	2	Berwick	1
Nth Blackburn Zebras	1	Lilydale	1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Ashburton Dynamos	3	3	0	0	15	3	12	9
Nth Blackburn Eagles	3	2	1	0	15	1	14	7
Ashburton Panthers	3	2	0	1	20	4	16	6
Eltham	3	2	0	1	8	10	-2	6
Ashburton All Stars	3	1	1	1	6	4	2	4
Lilydale	3	0	1	2	1	14	-13	1
Nth Blackburn Zebras	3	0	1	2	2	16	-14	1
Berwick	3	0	0	3	1	16	-15	0

Under 8 - Round 4

Ashburton Dynamos	v	Nth Blackburn Zebras
Ashburton All Stars	v	Lilydale
Berwick	v	Ashburton Panthers
Nth Blackburn Eagles	v	Eltham

Under 10 - Round 3

Ashburton Strikers	4	Nth Blackburn Hawks	0
Ashburton United		Bye	
Berwick	1	Ashburton Rockets	1
Eastern United	0	Ashburton Predators	4
Lilydale	0	Eltham	1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Ashburton Predators	3	3	0	0	30	0	30	9
Ashburton Strikers	2	2	0	0	9	1	8	6
Eltham	3	1	1	1	1	1	0	4
Lilydale	3	1	1	1	1	1	0	4
Ashburton United	2	1	0	1	2	5	-3	3
Nth Blackburn Hawks	3	0	2	1	1	5	-4	2
Berwick	3	0	2	1	1	13	-12	2
Eastern United	3	0	1	2	1	6	-5	1
Ashburton Rockets	2	0	1	1	1	15	-14	1

Under 10 - Round 4 — 23/5/98

Ashburton Predators	v	Eltham
Ashburton Rockets	v	Eastern United
Bye	v	Berwick
Lilydale	v	Ashburton Strikers
Nth Blackburn Hawks	v	Ashburton United

Under 12 - Round 4

Ashburton Terminators	2	Nth Blackburn Leopards	1
Eastern United	0	Berwick	1
Eltham		Bye	
Nth Blackburn Panthers	4	Lilydale	5

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Berwick	3	3	0	0	11	0	11	9
Eastern United	3	2	0	1	5	1	4	6
Nth Blackburn Leopards	3	1	0	2	4	4	0	3
Ashburton Terminators	2	1	0	1	3	3	0	3
Eltham	2	1	0	1	2	4	-2	3
Lilydale	2	1	0	1	5	10	-5	3
Nth Blackburn Panthers	3	0	0	3	4	12	-8	0

Under 12 - Round 4 — 23/5/98

Berwick	v	Ashburton Terminators
Bye	v	Nth Blackburn Panther
Lilydale	v	Eastern United
Nth Blackburn Leopards	v	Eltham

Under 14 - Round 3

Eltham	2	Nth Blackburn Tigers	1
Lilydale	2	Nth Blackburn Jaguars	1
Nth Blackburn Cheetahs	1	Berwick	3

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Lilydale	3	3	0	0	5	2	3	9
Eltham	3	2	0	1	6	5	1	6
Berwick	3	1	1	1	5	4	1	4
Nth Blackburn Jaguars	3	1	1	1	5	5	0	4
Nth Blackburn Cheetahs	3	0	2	1	3	5	-2	2
Nth Blackburn Tigers	3	0	0	3	2	5	-3	0

Under 14 - Round 4 — 23/3/98

Berwick	v	Nth Blackburn Tigers
Eltham	v	Nth Blackburn Jaguars
Nth Blackburn Cheetahs	v	Lilydale

Under 16 - Round 3

Berwick Termnators	0	Berwick United	5
Wltham	2	Nth Blackburn Cougars	1
Mt Evelyn		Bye	
Nth Blackburn Raiders	0	Lilydale	5

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Berwick United	3	3	0	0	10	1	9	9
Eltham	2	2	0	0	6	2	4	6
Nth Blackburn Cougars	3	1	1	1	4	4	0	4
Berwick Terminators	3	1	1	1	4	7	-3	4
Lilydale	3	1	0	2	5	3	2	3
Mt Evelyn	2	0	0	2	1	6	-5	0
Nth Blackburn Raiders	2	0	0	2	1	8	-7	0

Under 16 - Round 4 — 23/5/98

Berwick United	v	Eltham
Bye	v	Nth Blackburn Raiders
Lilydale	v	Berwick Terminators
Nth Blackburn Cougars	v	Mt Evelyn

Division One — Round 5

Box Hill	4	Nth Blackburn (1)	0
Eastern Utd (1)	2	Morrison	1
Lilydale (1)	2	Berwick Blues	1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Eastern Utd (1)	5	4	1	0	11	2	9	13
Morrison	5	3	0	2	9	8	1	9
Lilydale 1	5	2	1	2	11	9	2	7
Berwick Blue	5	2	1	2	7	7	0	7
Nth Blackburn (1)	5	1	1	3	6	12	-6	4
Box Hill	5	1	0	4	5	11	-6	3

Division 1 - Round 6 — 23/5/98

Berwuick Blues	v	Morrison
Box Hill	v	Eastern United 1
North Blackburn 1	v	Lilydale 1

Division Two - Round 5

Eastern Utd (2)	2	Mt Evelyn	0
Lilydale (2)	3	Eltham	2
McKillop	2	Nth Blackburn (2)	4
Canterbury		Bye	

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Nth Blackburn (2)	5	4	1	0	20	11	9	13
Canterbury	4	3	0	1	15	5	10	9
Eastern Utd (2)	4	2	1	1	10	8	2	7
Lilydale (2)	5	2	0	3	9	19	-10	6
Mt Evelyn	4	1	0	3	12	11	1	3
McKillop	4	1	0	3	5	10	-5	3
Eltham	4	1	0	3	5	12	-7	3

Division 2 - Round 6 — 23/5/98

Eltham	v	Eastern Utd (2)
Mt Evelyn	v	McKillop
Nth Blackburn (2)	v	Canterbury
Bye	v	Lilydale (2)

"Healthy Diet — Try It"

PREMIER LEAGUE RESULTS

Round 15:

Green Gully Cavaliers 3 (Donev, Genovesi, Babic) - Bentleigh Greens 1 (Karapatsos)

Round 16:

Fawkner Blues 0 - Green Gully Cavaliers 1 (Genovesi)
Altona Magic 4 (Trpcevski 2, Petrevski, Becvinovski) - Moorabbin City 1 (Costa)
South Dandenong 1 (R.Mezensof) - Thomastown Zebras 1 (Lingurovski)
Sunshine Georgies 1 (Vassallo) - Heidelberg United 1 (Georgiadis)
Bentleigh Greens 1 (Todorovski) - St Albans Saints 3 (Karl 2, Sianidis)
Springvale White Eagles 0 - Preston Lions 3 (Radecki 2, Markovski)

PREMIER LEAGUE FIXTURES

Round 17

Sunday May 24

Preston Lions v Bentleigh Greens - Goodyear Stadium - kick off 3pm
St Albans Saints v Fawkner Blues - Churchill Reserve - kick off 3pm
Moorabbin City v Springvale White Eagles - Kingston Heath Soccer Complex - kick off 3pm
Thomastown Zebras v Bulleen Inter Kings - Partridge Reserve - kick off 3pm
Port Melbourne Sharks v Altona Magic - Anderson Reserve - kick off 3pm

Monday May 25

Green Gully Cavaliers v Sunshine Georgies - Green Gully Reserve - kick off 8.15pm

Tuesday May 26

Heidelberg United v South Dandenong - Olympic Village - kick off 8.30pm

TEAM SCENE
BLACKTOWN CITY 1998

UNDER 13

Matthew Burrows
Michael Cutrupi
Garath Delange
Robert Sain
Cameron McDonald
Grant McIlvenie
Ahmed Kabbara
Peter Somogyi
Peter Hill
Craig O'Donohue
Nathan Meere
Matthew Ayoub
Angelo Martino

Coach:
Graham Brown
Manager:
Chris Sain

UNDER 14

Marcus Montana
Paul Karbon
Anthony Pisani
Craig Morabito
Matthew Duffell
George Zabek
Brodie Freeman
Rockie Restuccia
David Egan
Adrian Martino
Thomas Spencer
Gokhan Deler
Cameron Donald
Steven Baveas

Coach:
George Fallah
Manager:
Kerry Baveas

If you would like to see your U/6 - U/16 team appear in 'Team Scene', send your photos in with CLEARLY printed names (in order of appearance) and, if you would like your photos back, please send a stamped addressed envelope. REMEMBER: It doesn't have to be your best team, nor just for the boys. Send in single photos or the whole of your school/clubs teams together. YOUTH are our Soccer future. Bless them.

UNDER 15

Branislav Bakic
Eduard Hanzic
Brett Mason
Ian Albert-Thenet
Chad Lewis
Michael McCoy
Adam Kwasnik
Matthew Wills
Timothy Lapham
Michael Pearson
Glenn Murray
Joseph Addabbo

Coach:
Peter Denyer
Manager:
Yuon Albert-Thenet

UNDER 16

Alexander Krstich
Simon Emmanuel
Aaron Sawina
Daniel Wells
Ryan Noble
Tim O'Connell
Linzi Delange
Daniel McCann
Shaun Bartlett
Najib Haddad
Robert Trimboli
Mark Graham
Matt Sumeghy
Daniel Kraus

Coach:
Greg McGriskin
Manager:
Wes Sawina

WOMEN'S WRITES

BY JANENE MAR

ENTER NOW FOR KANGA CUP

The time for the annual Kanga Cup International Youth Tournament is not that far away, and all interested teams must get their entry in by Friday 29 May.

The festival of soccer is held each year in Canberra, and caters for both boys and girls, attracting teams from overseas as well as from around Australia. Over the years, the event has proved a great success, and has become a permanent fixture on the calendar for many a club. The 1998 event will be contested during 4-12 July.

Interest is said to be even greater this year with the advent of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, for which Canberra is also a football venue. The ACT girls Development Squad's recent tour to the USA's Dallas Cup Youth Tournament sparked an interest in several overseas teams to make the trip.

The tournament offers a top quality level of competition, with the week in Canberra also bringing social and cultural benefits to the youngsters. The philosophy behind the running of the Kanga Cup is: 'Uniting the youth of the world through Football'. Social activities will include an Official dinner, players' disco and Mini Golf. There are also optional visits to local sights, restaurants, shopping, and a trip to the snowfields.

As well as the more junior players, there is a slot for the slightly older candidates with the more flexible age division of U/24s, a great opportunity to get together many of your senior team and take on the competition. Maybe your club could make a real trip of it and enter a team in each division. Female age divisions are as follows:

Group AA - 24 years - Born on or after 1/1/74
Group BB - 16 years - Born on or after 1/1/82
Group CC - 4 years - Born on or after 1/1/84
Group DD - 12 years - Born on or after 1/1/86

All teams are guaranteed a minimum of five games during the Kanga Cup, as each will be bracketed into groups of six for the opening round robin. Winners and wildcards then advance to the elimination stage of the tournament, and as well as the glory, there are trophies awarded to all finalists.

Matches for the total of twelve divisions will be hosted at a number of fields around Canberra, after the opening ceremony and first games kick-off at the AIS Athletics Stadium.

Most finals will be featured at the AIS or Bruce Stadium. At present the finals timetable reads thus for the girls divisions .

Group DD - 10.30am - Saturday 11 July
Group CC - 1.30pm - Saturday
Group AA - 3.00pm - Saturday
Group BB - 12.00pm - Sunday 12 July

The 16 and 24 years women's divisions will play 35 minute halves, with the younger girls scheduled for 30 minute halves. Player interchange will be utilised for all matches.

Cup organisers encourage all teams to nominate a referee to accompany them to Canberra, adding to their refereeing experience in an enjoyable environment.

For those travelling in from afar, special airfare packages are being provided through Ansett Australia, with group accommodation deals also available on request.

Kanga Cup entry fee is $300 per team plus $35 per player, coach and manager participation fee. Each participant will receive a special Kanga Cup T-shirt, participation certificate, and ID Card, with every team receiving a match ball, equipment, and tickets to the Officials Dinner.

Entries and further information can be obtained by contacting Bill Van Der Vlist at Soccer Canberra on (02) 6260 4000.

Iceland comeback against USA

The touring Iceland fought back after suffering a humiliating 6-0 defeat at the hands of the USA, to go down by just the single goal two days later against the world champions.

Iceland, still alive in their campaign to qualify for next year's World Cup, put themselves to the ultimate challenge by taking on the number one team in the world on American soil.

Before a capacity crowd of over 5,000 at Indiana's Kuntz Stadium, the Icelanders were immediately set on the back foot in their first match last Friday week, conceding a goal within three minutes. A defensive error gave deadly striker Tiffeny Milbrett an early sniff, her drive from 18-metres grazing the underside of the crossbar and in.

As expected, the home side were in total control of proceedings, and freely set about attacking the opposition goal, using the full width of the pitch. However, a second goal was not added until the 32nd minute, superstar Mia Hamm surprising everyone as she potted the ball into the net direct from the corner kick, hitting the far post en-route.

Nine minutes later, the two goalscorers combined for a spectacular third goal. Milbrett confused her marker with some deft footwork, and provided a neat little chip into the middle of the box where Hamm threw herself into a diving header, leaving the goalkeeper with no chance.

Two minutes after the break, substitute Sara Whalen scored her first international goal, a close range effort to finish off some good work by Hamm. Tisha Venturini, also off the bench, added her name to the scoresheet in the 58th minute, a thumping effort from 25 metres which rocked the crossbar and down.

Soon after, Debbie Keller made it six for the US, converting a Kristine Lilly free-kick from close in.

Despite the comfortable victory, US Coach Tony DiCicco was not entirely impressed with the performance, citing occasional lapses of lethargic play.

Two days later on the Sunday, the story was a different one as the second and final match unfolded in Pennsylvania. With live television coverage, and a crowd of nearly 6,000, the champions found themselves up against a much more determined and organised Iceland.

Again the conditions were wet, but the Icelanders seemed to adjust the better to a ground which had suffered five days of rain.

The Americans dominated possession, but a packed backline of five successfully thwarted attack after attack. The home side's shooting abilities also left a lot to be desired, far too many flying high over the bar.

Then finally in the 77th minute the favourites broke through to score, much to their relief. Young substitute Natalie Neaton, on the field just nine minutes, became the match winner with her timely goal, a beautiful glancing header to convert a Julie Foudy chip from the left.

The US team's fortunes were further tested as both Foudy and Neaton could only find the woodwork in the last period of play, but in the end they were satisfied to have managed to record the hard-fought win.

TICKET FRENZY

Illustrating the calibre of the event and expected spectator interest, tickets have already gone on sale to the USA soccer community with over a year to go before the first ball is kicked for the 1999 World Cup.

The Americans have the opportunity to snap up prime seating at discount prices for the whole month of May, and reputedly almost 50,000 tickets have been sold so far. The fans have been targeted through direct mail brochures, and have the option of also purchasing the 'Stadium Series' packages by telephone, or on site at major tournaments and matches around the country. Later this year the packages will be released to the general public.

For those perhaps planning a trip to the US for the big event, single day prices will range from US$18 for a first-round double header, to US$100 for the prime ticket to witness the third-place play-off and final at California' s renowned Rose Bowl stadium. To cater for all budgets, there will be three categories of tickets for all games and venues.

NO REST FOR THE USA

With just two days rest after the matches against Iceland, the USA once again assembled, this time to jet off to Japan where they will contest a three-test series.

Japan, along with Asia's China and North Korea, was one of the first nations to qualify for the World Cup last December.

The first match was played on Sunday 17 May in Tokyo, with the series then travelling to Kobe for the second game on Thursday, and concluding this coming Sunday in Yokohama.

Queensland News

By Glenn Davis

Queensland soccer general manager Alan Vessey stunned the local sporting fraternity last week by announcing his resignation after a 20-year association with the sport.

However, Vessey, 58, won't be a loss to the game as he's joining the SOCOG (Sydney's Organising Committee for the Olympic Games) to run the Olympic soccer tournament in Brisbane.

Queensland will host six round-one matches and a quarter final — with seven of the 16 finalists playing in Brisbane.

One of his major remaining duties with the QSF will be to oversee the running of the Muldoon Cup between Queensland and New Zealand side Auckland at Perry Park on Saturday night.

Vessey, who also is the Brisbane Strikers' general-manager, has worked in Queensland soccer for 20 years as well as having a stint as general secretary for Soccer Australia from 1988-91.

While Vessey will be missed by Queensland soccer, he sees his new position as event director of the Olympic football tournament as an interesting new challenge.

"The challenge and status of the event was too good to knock back — it's an opportunity that won't come around again in my lifetime," Vessey said.

Meanwhile Auckland have chosen a powerful side to defend Muldoon Trophy against Queensland which has been selected from its XXXX league ranks. Auckland have chosen ten New Zealand internationals — virtually an All White sides.

Meanwhile rain washed out two of the five weekend fixtures. Of the three played, all proved spine-tinglers with Taringa Rovers holding onto second place with a 1-0 win, courtesy of a successful first-half strike from Des Hughes, over bottom placed Beenleigh.

Lions overcame a two goal half-time deficit to snatch a thrilling 3-2 win over Gold Coast while Mt Gravatt almost caused the upset of the season when they drew 3-3 with Brisbane City.

Lions found themselves trailing 2-0 after Gold Coast's Troy Greenwood and Steve Mack surprised the home side with two well taken goals in the first-half.

However, in a stunning turnaround, Lions' skipper and midfielder Steve Jackson scored his first double of the season while another from striker Warren Allen gave the homeside an improbable victory.

At Spencer Park, former Brisbane Striker player Chris Slater snatched the equaliser in the minute to continue his average of more than a goal a game for the season.

Mt Gravatt, the league's big improvers, looked set for a shock result after banging in three goals, a double from Nathan Carlos and another from midfielder Stu Collins.

QLD RESULTS QUEENSLAND SOCCER FEDERATION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts	Ded
Brisbane City	13	10	2	1	34	10	24	32	0
Taringa Rovers	13	7	3	3	20	13	7	24	0
Brisbane Lions	12	7	2	3	26	19	7	23	0
Rochedale Rov	12	6	1	5	18	17	1	19	0
IPSW Knights	12	6	1	5	20	26	-6	19	0
Gold Coast	13	4	4	5	17	19	-2	16	0
Mt Gravatt	13	3	5	5	24	20	4	14	0
B'Berg Waves	12	4	1	7	17	24	-7	13	0
Wynnum	12	3	1	8	18	27	-9	10	0
Beenleigh	12	2	0	10	16	35	-19	6	0

Round 13 Results

Brisbane	w/o	B'Berg Waves	w/o
Taringa Rovers	1	Beenleigh	0
Brisbane City	3	Mt Gravatt	3
Rochedale Rov	w/o	IPSW Knights	w/o

QUEENSLAND SOCCER FEDERATION
Division SP 1N

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts	Ded
Eastern Subs	11	8	3	0	23	8	15	27	0
Uni of Qld	11	6	2	3	15	11	4	20	0
Mitchelton	12	5	3	4	19	20	-1	18	0
Albany Creek	12	4	3	5	20	15	5	15	0
The Gap	9	4	3	2	20	17	3	15	0
North Star	11	4	2	5	18	15	3	14	0
Pine Rivers Utd	10	2	5	3	7	10	-3	11	0
Newmarket	11	1	4	6	10	23	-13	7	0
Grange Thistle	9	1	1	7	6	19	-13	4	0

Round 13 Results

Pine Rivers Utd	w/o	Grange Thistle	w/o
Newmarket	w/o	The Gap	w/o
Mitchelton	1	Eastern Subs	1
Uni of Qld	2	Albany Creek	0
Bye		North Star	

QUEENSLAND SOCCER FEDERATION
Division SP 1S

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts	Ded.
Toowoomba Utd	11	10	1	0	35	7	28	31	0
Capalaba	10	6	2	2	23	13	10	20	0
Rocklea Utd	10	6	1	3	27	16	11	19	0
Olympic Utd	11	4	2	5	21	21	0	14	0
Acacia Ridge	11	4	1	6	20	23	-3	13	0
Inala City	12	4	1	7	17	31	-14	13	0
Redlands Utd	10	4	0	6	19	31	-12	12	0
Souths Utd	11	1	6	4	14	19	-5	9	0
Slacks Creek	12	2	2	8	15	30	-15	8	0

Round 13 Results

Bye		Acacia Ridge	
Capalaba	w/o	Toowoomba Utd	w/o
Inala City	2	Slacks Creek	1
Souths Utd	w/o	Redlands Utd	w/o

That was their year ...

CANBERRA COSMOS

ALL STATS COMPILED BY MICKY BROCK

Position	Squad Numbers 1997/98 Season		P.O.Y. PTS
g/keeper	1	Tony GIANNASCA	6
defender	2	Paul DEE	4
defender	3	Andy ROBERTS	—
sweeper	4	Ivan ZELIC	7
defender	5	Andrew RAVANELLO	3
midfield	6	Ante MORIC	4
midfield	7	Gordon HUNTER	8
midfield	8	Norman KELLY (capt)	1
striker	9	Harry JAMES	1
striker	10	Michael MUSITANO	2
striker	11	Tony LEMEZINA	—
striker	12	Peter BULJAN	5
defender	13	Lindsay WILSON	6
defender	14	Dale WINGELL	—
striker	15	Marco PERINOVIC	—
defender	16	Toplica POPOVICH	3
midfield	17	Ilija PRENZOSKI	—
defender	18	Tom HAYTHORNTHWAITE	4
defender	19	Damian BROWN	—
g/keeper	20	Barney SMITH	—
striker	22	Tristram MORGAN	—
midfield	24	Jong-Sig KUN	—
midfield	23	Jason DUNN	—
midfield	26	Shane LYONS	—
striker	25	Oscar ZAMORANO	—
defender	7	Rodrigo MORENO	—

NOTE: Moreno wore No. 7 but left the country. Gordon Hunter was re-assigned this shirt.

Coach:
BRANKO CULINA
RALE RASIC

FAIR PLAY TABLE

	Y/C	R/C	TOT	
Brisbane Strikers	40	4	44	(12)
Adelaide City	46	0	46	(3)
Wollongong City	46	2	48	(6)
Carlton	46	3	49	(2)
Marconi Fairfield	50	2	52	(5)
Perth Glory	49	3	52	(8)
South Melbourne	52	2	54	(1)
Sydney Olympic	50	4	54	(9)
Newcastle Breakers	56	3	59	(13)
CANBERRA COSMOS	**55**	**4**	**59**	**(14)**
Sydney United	57	3	60	(4)
Gippsland Falcons	57	4	61	(11)
Melbourne Knights	58	6	64	(7)
Adelaide Sharks	66	5	71	(10)

(Final league placing in brackets)

FINAL TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
South Melbourne	26	13	9	4	46	41	48
Carlton	26	12	9	5	44	24	45
Adelaide City	26	13	4	9	45	30	43
Sydney United	26	11	10	5	37	26	43
Marconi Fairfield	26	12	7	7	33	25	43
Wollongong City	26	13	3	10	51	33	42
Melbourne Knights	26	11	6	9	37	35	39
Perth Glory	26	10	6	10	35	40	36
Sydney Olympic	26	10	4	12	32	38	34
Adelaide Sharks	26	10	4	12	32	38	34
Gippsland Falcons	26	8	7	11	28	36	31
Brisbane Strikers	26	6	5	15	23	40	23
Newcastle Breakers	26	4	9	13	30	50	21
CANBERRA COSMOS	**26**	**3**	**8**	**15**	**29**	**56**	**17**

Ericsson Cup Appearances 1997/98

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	Ap	Su	Gl
Jones*	x	x																									2		
Dee	x	x3	x	x>	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x				x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	21		
Roberts	x1		77	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x1			80		x	x	x	x	x	x	19	2	
Moric	x	x		x	x	x1			x	x	x	x	x	x3	x	x	x	x3	x1	x		x	x2		x		20		3
Moreno	x																										1		
Kelly	x		x			x3	x	x	x	x	x	x	x3	x	x	x2	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x		21		
James	x	x	x2	<66	x1	x2	45	x2			x2					x	58	68	x2	x2	x			55	x	x	13	5	3
Musitano	x	x1	x	x	x		x2	x3	x	x1				45	<61	40	x3	x			x1	x2	x1		x1	x	16	3	2
Lemezina	x2	x	x1		39																						3	1	
Wingell	x	x2	x	x							77	x1	73	x2	x				x	x1	x3	86					10	3	
Ravanello	x3	x	x	x	x3	56	x1		x			64	78	x	x	x	x2	x2	x3		x	x1					15	3	
Buljan	55	75	x		x2	x	x3	x	x	x			x2	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x3	x	x	x2	x1	21	2	9
Wilson	66				80			46	x	48	x	x	x	x	x>	33	38	x1	70		71		x	45	69	x	9	10	1
Haythornthwaite	45	x	60	x	x	x	x	x1	x	x	x	x2	x	62		x	x1	x	x	x	x	61	89	x1		45	18	6	
Zelic		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x1	x	x		61	x	x										14	1	2
Popovich		x3	x	x	x	x	x	x		x2	63	x	x1	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	22	1	1
Perinovic		62	55	<x																		88	70	x	x		3	4	1
Brown		76		66>	70	66	85	55	58		x3	56						75		68	77	x	x	x	60		4	12	1
Giannasca*			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x	21		
Hunter						x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	20		2
Prenzoski						76	77	75	86	39	69		23	69	45	61		60	75	63						x2	1	13	2
Smith*											x																1		
Morgan														x1	x1	x3	66										3	1	
Kun																				x	62		x	x2		x3	4	1	1
Dunn																					x1							1	1
Lyons																										72		1	
Zamorano																										76		1	

* = GOALKEEPER

Fixtures

		F-A	Scorers	Home	Away
1	SYDNEY UNITED	1-3	Buljan 67	3,500	
2	marconi fairfield	0-2			4,530
3	CARLTON	1-3	Musitano 68	3,505	
4	adelaide sharks	0-3			3,655
5	ADELAIDE CITY	1-2	Musitano 90	2,005	
6	gippsland falcons	0-0			2,100
7	BRISBANE STRIKERS	2-1	Zelic 47, Brown 89	2,008	
8	south melbourne	1-1	James 44		4,200
9	MELBOURNE KNIGHTS	1-1	Buljan 68	2,300	
10	wollongong city	0-8			3,868
11	NEWCASTLE BREAKERS	1-1	Moric 45	1,573	
12	perth glory	1-1	Zelic 65		12,174
13	uts olympic	1-1	Buljan 40		4,638
14	UTS OLYMPIC	8-1	Moric 5, 68, Wilson 37, Buljan 41, 58, 63, Prenzoski 72, 89	2,475	
15	sydney united	1-4	Buljan 73		3,547
16	MARCONI FAIRFIELD	0-2		3,878	
17	carlton	0-2			2,476
18	ADELAIDE SHARKS	1-0	Hunter 75	2,472	
19	adelaide city	1-4	Buljan 19		3,477
20	GIPPSLAND FALCONS	1-1	Popovich 48	2,016	
21	melbourne knights	1-3	Dunn 56		3,584
22	SOUTH MELBOURNE	1-1	Hunter 45	3,471	
23	brisbane strikers	2-2	James 51, Perinovic 75		2,701
24	WOLLONGONG CITY	1-3	Kunn 44	2,342	
25	newcastle breakers	1-2	Buljan 59		3,344
26	PERTH GLORY	1-2	James 57	1,655	
	Home Total		**Away Total**	**33,457**	**54,625**
			Agg. Total		**88,082**

FA CUP REPORT

ARSENAL'S FANTASTIC DOUBLE

WENGER'S INSPIRATIONAL NEW ERA IN ENGLISH FOOTBALL

ARSENAL 2 NEWCASTLE UNITED 0

Overmars 23, Anelka 69

Arsenal completed their second League and Cup double by beating Newcastle 2-0 in the FA Cup Final at Wembley last Saturday afternoon (Sunday morning Australia time), and they did it in style.

Stand up for the Champions - and worthy FA Cup winners too. After all, be it in the marathon of the League season or in intense competition for the knock-out sprint, Arsenal have so brilliantly left everyone standing.

In truth, they were not required to touch the heights of their brilliant best in an almost contemptuous disregard for a rarely existent challenge from woeful Newcastle to establish Highbury's second League and Cup double.

If at times Arsenal showed signs of wilting in the Wembley heat, it was only because Newcastle for the most part could not emerge from the shade with any kind of real conviction.

Newcastle tried their best, of course, to seek comfort in the renowned menace of a certain Alan Shearer. But with the two expensive forward buys - John-Dahl Tomasson and Andreas Andersson - both considered insufficiently equipped by manager Kenny Dalglish to provide effective support, the most accomplished striker in the land was condemned to work alone.

His understandable frustration manifested itself quite wrongly in the final minutes of a most unsatisfactory opening half with a lunge at Tony Adams which brought a yellow card from referee Paul Durkin.

Sadly for the fabulously supportive 'Toon Army', it was all so horribly reminiscent of their most previous FA Cup Final appearance in 1974 when it was Malcolm Macdonald who was forced to plough a similarly lonely furrow.

Perhaps the biggest difference between then and now is that the team of 24 years ago simply did not perform on the day and took a deserved 3-0 hiding from Liverpool, while the current Newcastle has failed palpably to produce 90 minutes of note all season long.

Such is the depth of Shearer's grim perseverance that he requires the merest notion of an opportunity. It came for him in the 64th minute from a split-second loss of concentration by Martin Keown. Shearer was on to it in an instant, but although the fiercely-driven left-foot shot defied intervention by goalkeeper David Seaman, the ball struck the inside of the Arsenal post and came back into play.

Along with it went all of Newcastle's unlikely hopes and dreams, and yet by that stage Arsenal should have been so far in front for it not to have mattered a jot.

By the time Marc Overmars had deposited his 16th goal for Arsenal in the 23rd minute, the Gunners could have been luxuriating in the comfort of a two goals advantage.

On both occasions in the 15th and 19th minutes it was Nicolas Anelka who inexplicably lost his sense of direction with two headers wide of the mark from a range that could have not been any more inviting.

The absence of Footballer of the Year Dennis Bergkamp could so easily have been telling in respect of the sharpness of the cutting edge he gives to the Gunners. But Highbury boasts a second flying Dutchman with a delightful habit of hitting the target.

And when Emmanuel Petit produced an exquisitely-delivered forward pass, Overmars intelligently warded off a muscular challenge from Alessandro Pistone before rifling a shot under goalkeeper Shay Given.

The superbly complementary midfield assets of Petit and his fellow Frenchman Patrick Vieira exerted a characteristic stranglehold which allowed Ray Parlour to run wild and free. Newcastle failed to fathom how to nullify that particular threat all afternoon.

Mr Durkin was to emphasise the strength of his authority even on such a showpiece occasion, with bookings for Newcastle's Warren Barton and Nikolaus Dabizas plus Arsenal's Nigel Winterburn in the early minutes of the second half. Such stern notification from England's World Cup representative in France that no nonsense would be tolerated produced the desired effect.

With the black-and-white-shirted horde of Newcastle support volubly demanding a more attacking expression, there came a more effective and sustained forward momentum from the Geordies.

Dabizas put a header onto the top of the Arsenal crossbar from a Robert Lee free kick seconds before Shearer rattled the upright.

Marc Overmars: Opened the scoring at Wembley.

But, in truth, only the most fiercely partisan and outrageously expectant Newcastle fan would have suspected that the outcome would prove to be any different than what was to prevail.

And it was Anelka who provided the emphatic confirmation in the 69th minute through a superbly delivered strike on the run. There might have a slight suspicion that the young Frenchman fastened onto the beautifully delivered pass from Parlour in an offside position, but there was no room for debate about the ruthlessness of the final hammer blow.

There might even have been a third a minute later had Steve Howey not checked the powerful advancement of Parlour into a scoring position with a surreptitious trip around the ankles.

And it was definitely not to be Shearer's day when in measuring up the late opportunity of a consolatory reply he had the ball whipped off his toe by a brilliantly-timed intervention from Winterburn.

"The real champions are those who have never had enough," said the victorious Arsene Wenger a couple of weeks ago, after Arsenal had confirmed their league triumph with a victory over Everto, 4-0 at Highbury.

His highly-disciplined back four defensive unit, refurbished midfield and a potent attack even when deprived of Bergkamp and Ian Wright, have gone on to prove beyond any reasonable doubt that they are indeed the finest and most formidable team in the land.

And while the promise of European adventure beckons, it will be fascinating to observe whether they possess the capacity to take on and conquer the continentals.

Newcastle, too, qualify for European competition only by the merit of being beaten finalists with Arsenal contesting the European Champions League. But while there is stability at Highbury, there promises to be a summer of revolution at a deeply distressed St James's Park.

WHAT ARSENE HAD TO SAY

Arsene Wenger, the first foreign manager to win the English league title, said the "fantastic" achievement of completing the double on Saturday in his first full season in English soccer had yet to sink in.

But the normally undemonstrative Frenchman praised the spirit of his multi-national side after they beat Newcastle 2-0 in the F.A. Cup final at Wembley.

Arsenal won the double in 1970-71 and are only the second club after Manchester United to capture it twice.

Goals from Dutch winger Marc Overmars in the 24th minute and 19-year-old French striker Nicolas Anelka after 24 minutes of the second-half sealed victory for the north London club against a Newcastle side that only came alive in the final quarter of English soccer's greatest occasion.

"It's fantastic what this team has done. When you think where we stood in December and what we've done since December is just remarkable," Wenger said.

Arsenal were unbeaten in the league and F.A. Cup from December 13 until after they clinched the league title on May 3. Wenger put the improvement down to improved organisation and understanding between the players.

"The young players improved a lot and the spirit became better and the mixture between the foreign and English players. They knew each other better and after that the results gave us confidence.

"I frankly must admit I don't realise what's happened today. I knew that coming here as champions and not winning it would be terrible for me because maybe it would never happen again.

"To win the championship and the Cup is so difficult and I think it put a little bit of pressure on us today."

Wenger has now won the Cup in England, in France with Monaco, as well as a league title, and Japan with Grampus Eight. But he said clinching the English league title was "more unbelievable."

"We came from somewhere where nobody gave us a chance and the most important trophy for me is always the championship."

He picked out Overmars and Anelka for particular praise after both players recovered from a disappointing start to the season to score freely.

"They are two great players. Overmars is a world class player, his record is a phone book - he's won everything in the world, this guy," Wenger said of Overmars who was highly successful with Ajax Amsterdam before moving to Highbury at the beginning of the season.

Wenger said the turning point of the game was when England captain Alan Shearer took advantage of a mistake by Arsenal central defender Martin Keown but saw his shot came back off the post.

Four minutes later Anelka scored the decisive Arsenal goal. "It's such a great season - Shearer's shot came out and maybe in another season it would have gone in," Wenger said.

Newcastle manager Kenny Dalglish praised Arsenal as worthy double-winners but was disappointed his side did not get more reward from an improved second-half performance.

Tony Adams: Superb at the back.

"They were better than us but not in the second half. We never got the bounce of the ball that we would have needed," Dalglish said.

"I don't think Arsenal were at their best today, they looked tired in the second-half."

Wenger came to Arsenal in September 1996 and many Arsenal supporters questioned whether he was up to the job of leading the Gunners.

Wenger said he was proud to have done well for Arsenal. "It's difficult for me to hate and want revenge, I just would like to satisfy people who have confidence in me.

"I would say that period when I was criticised, it was jealousy but it didn't really move me."

THIS SURPASSES EVERYTHING

Lee Dixon hailed Arsenal's League and Cup Double as the Gunners' greatest achievement.

Goals from Marc Overmars and Nicolas Anelka sank Newcastle 2-0 at Wembley in the FA Cup final and enabled Arsene Wenger's side to win the double, the first time since 1971 and the side of George, McClintock, Graham, Wilson and many other stars.

FA/SFA CUP REPORTS

"It was just a great team perfomance," said Ray Parlour.

"This just surpasses anything that we've done in the past. Winning the League was brilliant but winning them both together is fantastic."

Another member of the Gunners' ageing but celebrated back four, Nigel Winterburn, put Arsenal's success down to the right blend of English and foreign talent.

"It's just a testament to the players who have come into the team," said Winterburn. "They've adapted to Arsenal's type of game superbly."

Ray Parlour, snubbed this week by Glenn Hoddle when the coach named his England squad to face Saudi Arabia, pointed to the pace of team-mates and goalscoring heroes Marc Overmars and Nicolas Anelka as the key difference.

"Nicolas was brilliant up front today, he's always a constant threat, you just have to put the ball near him," Parlour said.

"And Marc Overmars scored a great goal. But it was just a great team performance."

That it was Ray, that it was, as the celebrations from last Saturday night are still going on in North London.

"It's difficult for me to hate and want revenge, I just would like to satisfy people who have confidence in me," says Monsieur Wenger.

BRAVE HEARTS AFTER 36 YEARS

RANGERS 1 HEARTS 2

McCoist 81 — Cameron 1p, Adam 53

Hearts ended 36 years of trophy famine by landing the Scottish Cup with a 2-1 victory over Glasgow Rangers in the final on Saturday.

Colin Cameron's first-minute penalty and a stunning strike from Frenchman Stephane Adam ended the Edinburgh club's barren spell.

Not even a late goal from Rangers' substitute Ally McCoist could dent Hearts' celebrations in front of a 48,946 crowd at Celtic Park.

Later, amid wild scenes of celebration from the Hearts' fans, Adam said: "This is a great feeling. I'm going to get drunk for a week!"

Hearts had lost a Scottish Cup final in every decade since they last held the trophy in 1956: enduring heart-ache in 1968, 1976, 1986 and 1996.

But once Cameron scored after just 45 seconds to register the quickest cup final goal for 22 years, victory always seemed theirs.

Captain Steve Fulton was pulled down in the penalty area by Ian Ferguson after just 30 seconds, and Cameron slotted his ninth and most important goal of the season.

Brian Laudrup, playing his last match for Rangers before his move to Chelsea, struck the post in the 44th minute, but thereafter the Dane drifted out of the game.

Hearts went 2-0 ahead in the 53rd minute when Adam, signed last summer from Metz, pounced on a long free kick by his keeper and compatriot Gilles Rousset, robbed Lorenzo Amoruso, and smacked a fierce right-foot shot past keeper Andy Goram.

Rangers rallied and French international Rousset made a splendid save from McCoist in the 63rd minute.

But McCoist could not be denied and he gave his side a lifeline in the 81st minute when he raced onto a pass from Rino Gattuso and scored with a right-foot shot from 12 metres.

Four minutes from the end, McCoist looked to have earned a penalty when he was pulled down by David Weir but referee Willie Young awarded only a free kick just inches outside the box, and Hearts held on.

Hearts manager Jim Jefferies said: "The last 10 minutes were the longest of my life but this has been the greatest day of my life. I always said the first goal would be crucial and I'm just glad we got it.

"We changed our tactics after losing 13 goals to Rangers in the four league matches and we let them have the ball. Instead of them hitting us on the break, we did it to them.

"This club has been in the doldrums for a long time and hopefully this trophy can now give us the platform to go on and achieve more success."

Rangers, who have dominated Scottish football for the last decade, now have to reflect on an empty season, but manager Walter Smith vowed it would not be repeated.

Smith, in his last game in charge before making way for Dick Advocaat, said in a dire warning for those wishing for the Auld Firm's demise:

"The bad news for Scottish football is that this is as bad as Rangers get. Next season we will be back stronger than ever."

Hearts' John Robertson

SOD'S LAW RULES

(The following article appeared in the Scottish Sports pages last weekend).

If you believe in the Law of Averages, stick your lottery stake on Hearts to beat Rangers in the Tennents Scottish Cup Final at Celtic Park this afternoon.

If, on the other hand, you put any credence in the Law according to Sod, then don't bother. The Tynecastle side have been beaten in four Finals, those of 1968, 1976, 1986 and 1996, since winning the Cup for the fifth and last time in their history, in 1956.

Yet there is no reason other than the fanciful one for thinking they could be about to break their run of bad luck; this, despite Rangers' injuries and suspensions.

Fate simply refuses to accept that every team should get their turn. They have to earn it, invariably by being the better one on the day.

Dundee United, don't forget, had to endure six defeats in the Final before eventually succeeding while Hibs have failed on their last seven appearances in it.

It's not difficult, ofcourse, to understand Hearts' growing impatience for success in this competition or, indeed, any other. They are the perenniel under-achievers.

Jim Jefferies gave a hint of his, and their, frustration the other day when he said: "People still talk about John Cumming, Freddie Glidden and others who were in the last Hearts side to win the cup.

"Now it's time to add some new names to the slate. If we beat Rangers on Saturday then, in 30 years' time, it would be the Camerons, Ritchies, Weirs and McCanns people would be talking about."

Can these players and others rise to Jefferies' challenge? Will the Law of Averages, if there is such a thing, come into play? Not if Sod, who is probably a Rangers supporter, has any say in the matter.

Their names will forever be inscribed in the legend of Raith Rovers but not too many of them have enjoyed much luck since the great day they won the Coca-Cola Cup.

Scott Thomson, who saved a penalty in the shoot-out with Celtic, has been to Hull and back, Motherwell offering him sustenance only briefly towards the end of this season.

Davie Sinclair stands somewhere in the shadows with Dundee United after following Jimmy Nicholl to Millwall whilst Steve Crawford, who took the same route out of Stark's Park, is on his way into the First Division with Hibs.

Jason Dair? He's back to where he started, having returned to Kirkcaldy with Nicholl. But whither Shaun Dennis? Languishing out of view at Easter Road, according to the latest bulletin from the east.

Only Colin Cameron, from Raith's Class of 94, can be said to have prospered in the interim. Hasn't he done well, the Hearts midfielder who goes to Celtic Park in search of a Tennents Scottish Cup winner's medal?

"Maybe I could say I'm the one whose career actually has gone forward", the 25 year old mused at Tynecastle. "I was lucky enough to get the break of coming here and have taken full advantage of it.

"There's still better to come from me. I know that and, hopefully, I can prove as much in the Final. Then, whatever I've done this season, I'll be looking to better next season."

Cameron could so easily have joined Nicholl, Sinclair, Crawford and Dair at The Den when Raith's successful side broke up amid some acrimony aroused by Alex Penman's stewardship of the club. Who knows where he'd be now had he done so.

He might, on the other hand, have joined Aberdeen and risked becoming traumatised by all the criticism they have had to endure these past two, very poor seasons at Pittodrie.

Cameron opted, instead, for the short journey across the Forth Bridge and, given all that has happened to him since, he has no cause whatsoever for regret. A championship medal looked a possibility until just a few weeks ago. He has collected another cap at B international level and could make the transition to the full squad before his present contract expires next summer.

"Yeah, I spoke to Jimmy Nicholl when I was on my way out of Raith Rovers two and a half years back and he said he wanted to take me down to Millwall, possibly at the end of that season", Cameron recalled.

"Then the thing came up with Aberdeen, just before the transfer deadline. Roy Aitken wanted me to go up and sign but things didn't work out there.

"So I was resigned to going to England the following season when, out of the blue, Jim Jefferies got in touch. Within a couple of days I'd signed for Hearts. When I look now at the fortunes of the lads who did go to Millwall, as well as some of the others, I realise I might have been a bit lucky.

"Then again, as everybody says, you need a bit of luck if you are to make your way in football. I know I made the right decision in coming to Tynecastle. It's been proved and I'm very happy here.

"I've had two great years so far and, all going well, I'll maybe get an extension beyond a third. The manager has spoken to me briefly about my contract. But we wanted to get the League and Cup out of the way before doing anything more. Hopefully, we can win the Cup and then start talking.'

Cameron duly conceded that Hearts are required to play at least as well as at any time in the season if they are to beat Rangers; even a depleted Ibrox side minus Jonan Thern, Jorg Albertz and Alex Cleland.

The opposition, he argued, are not short of quality in reserve. But he countered then by saying that Hearts have something that even Rangers' millions are not guaranteed to buy.

"We have great team spirit which has brought us through the season", Cameron said. "People say we've taken the easy route to the Final although, apart from the Falkirk game, we've won our matches quite comfortably.

"So we know that we've got to where we are on merit. It's up to us now to earn the right to bring the Cup back to Edinburgh and everybody is sure that we are capable of doing that."

Weird & Wonderful

By Stuart Jones

1967-68

In 1937 Manchester City were champions, the following season they were relegated. In 1966 the team were in the second division, by 1968 they were first division champions.

Okay, it took a season longer but it was still a great effort. Behind City were their great rivals Manchester United, plus Liverpool. At the bottom were Fulham, who were relegated and the battle to avoid the other relegation place was fierce.

On May 4 Sheffield Wednesday lost at home to Arsenal 1-2, and Coventry could only draw 0-0 at Southampton seven days later. Sheffield United had their chance on May 11 with victory enough to ensure safety. However, Chelsea, who had little to play for, were still victorious by two goals to one, thus relegating the Blades.

As to who would replace the two relegated clubs was the next question. That puzzle was not answered until the final day. Blackpool defeated Huddersfield 3-1 away and were looking for other results to go their way. QPR took on Villa in Birmingham and took the points with a 2-1 victory.

However, it was not enough for either side as Ipswich Town gained a point from a 1-1 draw at home to Blackburn — a point that assured them of the Division Two Championship. Up with them went Queens Park Rangers, while down at the bottom Rotherham and Plymouth were the worst performing sides and were relegated.

Division Three was just as tight. Eventual champions Oxford could only be crowned on the final day as they defeated Southport 1-0 at home. This left Bury, who defeated Watford 2-0 at the last hurdle, in second yet happy enough with promotion.

Unluckiest of all was Shrewsbury, with their 1-0 win at Gillingham not enough to gain promotion.

At the bottom Colchester and Scunthorpe were relegated. Grimsby and Mansfield fought out third and fourth last spots, really in vein as both bring relegation, with Grimsby's 3-2 win not enough to replace the Stags, who lost 0-3 on the final day.

Peterborough were then deducted 19 points for paying players 'irregular bonuses' — came last officially and were thus relegated, and so Mansfield were safe, leaving Grimsby fans devastated.

Luton Town were champions of Division Four with Barnsley, Hartlepools, and Crewe also promoted. Bradford City just missed out on promotion by a point whilst their near neighbours Bradford Park Avenue finished bottom of the league.

The League Cup was finally being taken seriously, and two of the big guns from the English football league met in the final. Leeds United took on Arsenal with Terry Cooper's goal separating the teams at full time. Leeds' Scottish 'General', Billy Bremner, got his hands on yet another cup.

The FA Cup saw them also make the semis but they were knocked out at that stage by Everton (0-1). In the other semi-final WBA defeated City 2-0 to progress to the Final.

The FA Cup Final ended 0-0 after normal time.

However, in extra-time Jeff Astle, who had scored in every round previous, made a great run and shot from outside the box, a shot which deflected off two players and back to him. He made no mistake second time around and put the ball in the top corner, giving him a new record and, more importantly, West Bromwich Albion the FA Cup.

It was not just domestically that British teams shone. In Europe Manchester United defeated Hibernian Paola (4-0 on agg), FK Sarajevo (2-1), Gornik Zabrze (2-1) and Real Madrid (4-3) to face up to Benfica in the final of the European Cup.

This is where Matt Busby had once dreamt his original 'Busby Babes' to be, now his rebuilt side had made the pinnacle. Appropriately enough, perhaps, the final was held at Wembley where two seasons previous England had had its finest hour. At full time the score read 1-1 but in extra-time the Manchester United greats stood up to be counted with Best, Kidd, and Charlton all scoring.

The final score: 4-1, and the great man, Matt Busby, had his dreams come true and an English side held aloft the European Cup for the very first time. Many remember this but forget that Leeds also celebrated European glory this very same season.

They had defeated AC Spora (16-0 on agg) in the Fairs Cup, then squeezed past Partizan Beograd (3-2) before taking the Scottish trifecta, Hibs (2-1), Glasgow Rangers (2-0), and Dundee (2-1).

The final was against Ferencvaros and the two legs only saw one goal. It went to Jones of Leeds in the 41st minute of the first-leg and so Don Revie's men took home the European Fairs Cup.

One other mention must go to Cardiff City who reached the semi-finals of the Cup Winners Cup. They had put Shamrock Rovers, Nac Breda, and Torpedo Moskva to the sword but came unstuck in the semi-finals when they lost 3-4 on aggregate to German side Hamburger SV (Milan eventually won this trophy).

Back in the Southern League Chelmsford City had made a great run in their last few games to win a very close title race. Wimbledon finished runners-up with another league side these days, Cambridge United, third. Relegated were Burton Albion, Corby Town, Cambridge City, and Hastings United. Promoted in their place were First Division champions Worcester City, plus Kettering Town, Bedford Town, and Rugby Town.

For Rugby it had been a tight battle with a 0-0 draw against promotion chasing Dartford enough to give them promotion and leave Dartford empty handed.

Gravesend and Northfleet finished last once more, conceding 112 goals in 42 games, but even worse, scoring a paltry 28.

The Southern League Cup final was close with the scores locked at 1-1 after the two leg finals. So Margate took on Ramsgate once more in a play-off and a John Fahy hat-trick saw Margate lift the trophy.

North of the Border, and European champions Celtic ruled the roost once more. In the Division One chase they finished two points clear of Rangers, with Hibs third 16 points adrift.

At the bottom Motherwell and Stirling Albion were relegated.

For Albion it was the fifth time they had dropped from Division One in the last 12 seasons.

In their place would come Division Two winners St Mirren (who finished nine points clear of the field), and runners up Arbroath (who ended a further four points clear of third).

At the bottom Stenhousemuir and Stranraer ended bottom on 20 points, with Stenhousemuir holding up the league thanks to an inferior goal average.

Celtic also took out the Scottish League Cup in an entertaining affair, thanks to a 5-3 victory over Dundee in the Final held at Hampden Park on October 28 1968 (equalling the highest aggregate score). The other game had also involved Celtic, but was much more one-sided.

It was ten years since Rangers had been beaten by Celtic in the final 7-1!

In the Scottish FA Cup Dunfermline Athletic had bundled Celtic out in Round One. They went on to make the Final and on that day met Hearts. Dunfermline came through on the day with the scoreline reading 3-1.

Dunfermline were thus able to add to their SFA Cup success of 1961.

Around Europe the Champions were:

Austria: SK Rapid Wien (Cup double)
Belgium: RSC Anderlecht (Cup - Club Brugge)
Bulgaria: Levski Sofia (Cup - Spartak Sofia)
France: AS Saint-Etienne (Cup double)
East Germany: Carl-Zeiss Jena (Cup - I.FC Union Berlin)
West Germany: I.FC Nurnberg (Cup - I.FC Koln)
Holland: Ajax (Cup - ADO Den Haag)
Italy: Milan AC (Cup - AC Torino)
Poland: Ruch Chorzow (Cup - Gornick Zabrze)
Portugal: Benfica (Cup - FC Porto)
Romania: Steaua Bucuresti (Cup - Dinamo Bucuresti)
Russia: Dynamo Kiev (Cup - Torpedo Moskva)
Spain: Real Madrid CF (Cup - CF Barcelona)
Sweden: Osters IF Vaxjo
Switzerland: FC Zurich (Cup - FC Lugano)
European Champions Cup: Manchester United
European Fairs Cup: Leeds United
European Cup Winners Cup: AC Milan

ENGLAND

DIVISION 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Manchester C	42	17	2	2	52	16	9	4	8	34	27	58
Manchester U	42	15	2	4	49	21	9	6	6	40	34	56
Liverpool	42	17	2	2	51	17	5	9	7	20	23	55
Leeds U	42	17	3	1	49	14	5	6	10	22	27	53
Everton	42	18	1	2	43	13	5	5	11	24	27	52
Chelsea	42	11	7	3	34	25	7	5	9	28	43	48
Tottenham H	42	11	7	3	44	20	8	2	11	26	39	47
WBA	42	12	4	5	45	25	5	8	8	30	37	46
Arsenal	42	12	6	3	37	23	5	4	12	23	33	44
Newcastle U	42	12	7	2	38	20	1	8	12	16	47	41
Nottingham F	42	11	6	4	34	22	3	5	13	18	42	39
West Ham U	42	8	5	8	43	30	6	5	10	30	39	38
Leicester C	42	7	7	7	37	34	6	5	10	27	35	38
Burnley	42	12	7	2	38	16	2	3	16	26	55	38
Sunderland	42	8	7	6	28	28	5	4	12	23	33	37
Southampton	42	9	8	4	37	31	4	3	14	29	52	37
Wolves	42	10	4	7	45	36	4	4	13	21	39	36
Stoke C	42	10	3	8	30	29	4	4	13	20	44	35
Sheffield W	42	6	10	5	32	24	5	2	14	19	39	34
Coventry C	42	8	5	8	32	32	1	10	10	19	39	33
Sheffield U	42	7	4	10	25	31	4	6	11	24	39	32
Fulham	42	6	4	11	27	41	4	3	14	29	57	27

DIVISION 2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ipswich	42	12	7	2	45	20	10	8	3	34	24	59
QPR	42	18	2	1	45	9	7	6	8	22	27	58
Blackpool	42	12	6	3	33	16	12	4	5	38	27	58
Birmingham C	42	12	6	3	54	21	7	8	6	29	30	52
Portsmouth	42	13	6	2	43	18	5	7	9	25	37	49
M'brough	42	10	7	4	39	19	7	5	9	21	35	46
Millwall	42	9	10	2	35	16	5	7	9	27	34	45
Blackburn R	42	13	5	3	34	16	3	6	12	22	33	43
Norwich C	42	12	4	5	40	30	4	7	10	20	35	43
Carlisle U	42	9	9	3	38	22	5	4	12	20	30	41
Crystal P	42	11	4	6	34	19	3	7	11	22	37	39
Bolton W	42	8	6	7	37	28	5	7	9	23	35	39
Cardiff C	42	9	6	6	35	29	4	6	11	25	37	38
Huddersfield T	42	10	6	5	29	23	3	6	12	17	38	38
Charlton A	42	10	6	5	43	25	2	7	12	20	43	37
Aston Villa	42	10	3	8	35	30	5	4	12	19	34	37
Hull C	42	6	8	7	25	23	6	5	10	33	50	37
Derby Co	42	8	5	8	40	35	5	5	11	31	43	36
Preston NE	42	8	7	6	29	24	4	4	13	14	41	35
Rotherham U	42	7	4	10	22	32	3	7	11	20	44	31
Plymouth A	42	5	4	12	26	34	4	5	12	12	36	27

DIVISION 3

Oxford U 57, Bury 56, Shrewsbury T 55,torquary U 53, Reading 51,Watford 50, Walsall 50, Barrow 50, Peterboro' U *50, Swindon T 49, Brighton & HA 48, Gillingham 48, Bournemouth 47, Stockport Co 47,Southport 46, Bristol R 43,Oldham A 43, Northampton T 41, Orient 41, Tranmere R 40, Mansfield T 37, Grimsby T 37, Colchester U 33, Scunthorpe U 32.

* Peterborough United deducted 19 points for irregular bonuses – automatically demoted to the Fourth Division.

DIVISION 4

Luton T 66, Barnsley 61, Hartlepools U 60, Crewe A 58,Bradford C 57, Southen U 54, Chesterfield 53, Wrexham 53, Aldershot 53, Doncaster R 51, Halifax T 46, Newport Co 45,Lincoln C 43, Brentford 43, Swansea T 42, Darlington 41, Notts Co 41, Port Vale 39, Rochdale 38, Exeter C 38, York C 36, Chester 32, Workington 31, Bradford 23.

SOUTHERN LEAGUE PREMIER DIVISION

Chelmsford City 57, Wimbledon 55, Cambridge United 53, Cheltenham Town 53, Guildford City 49, Romford 48, Barnet 48, Morgale 46, Wellington Town 45, Hillington Borough 45, King's Lynn 44, Yeovil Town 44, Weymouth 42, Hereford United 41, Nuneaton Borough 40, Dover 40, Poole Town 36, Stevenage Town 35, Burton Albion 34, Corby Town 27, Cambridge City 26, Hastings United 16.

SOUTHERN LEAGUE DIVISION 1

Worcester City 60, Kettering Town 58, Bedford Town 55, Rugby Town 55, Dartford 55, Bath City 54, Banbury United 53, Ramsgate Athletic 51, Marthyr Tydfil 49, Tonbridge 45, Canterbury City 43, Ashford Town 42, Brentwood Town 41, Bexley United 37, Trowbridge Town 35, Gloucester City 33, Wisbech Town 28, Folkestone Town 27, Dunstable Town 26, Barry Town 26, Gravesend & Northfleet 19.

SCOTLAND

DIVISION 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Celtic	34	30	3	1	106	24	63
Rangers	34	28	5	1	93	34	61
Hibernian	34	20	5	9	67	49	45
Dunfermline A	34	17	5	12	64	41	39
Aberdeen	34	16	5	13	63	48	37
Morton	34	15	6	13	57	53	36
Kilmarnock	34	13	8	13	59	57	34
Clyde	34	15	4	15	55	55	34
Dundee	34	13	7	14	62	59	33
Partick T	34	12	7	15	51	67	31
Dundee U	34	10	11	13	53	72	31
Hearts	34	13	4	17	56	61	30
Airdrie	34	10	9	15	45	58	29
St Johnstone	34	10	7	17	43	52	27
Falkirk	34	7	12	15	36	50	26
Raith R	34	9	7	18	58	86	25
Motherwell	34	6	7	21	40	66	19
Stirling A	34	4	4	26	29	105	12

DIVISION 2

St Mirren 62, Arbroath 53, East Fife 49,Queen's Park 48, Ayr U 42, Queen of South 38, Forfar A 38, Albion R 37, Clydebank 34, Dumbarton 33, Hamilton A 33, Cowdenbeath 32, Montrose 31, Berwick R 30, E Stirling 28, Brechin C 28, Alloa 28, Stranraer 20, Stenhousemuir 20.

Around the Globe

ALBANIA

Besa Kavaje	4	Albpetrol Patos	0
Laci	0	SK Tirana	3
Teuta Durres	1	Flamurtari Vlore	0
Partizani Tirana	2	Dinamo Tirana	3
Sopoti Librazhd	3	Bylis Ballsh	0
Vllaznia Shkoder	1	Tomorri Berat	0
Elbasani	4	Skenderbeu Korce	1
Lushnja	4	Shkumbini Peqin	0
Shqiponja	3	Apollonia	0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Vllaznia	32	22	5	5	39	20	71
SK Tirana	32	18	8	6	53	18	62
Partizani	32	19	4	9	58	24	61
Teuta Durres	32	17	2	13	37	34	53
Apollonia	32	14	7	11	37	30	49
Shkumbini	32	15	3	14	47	43	48
Elbasani	32	14	4	14	45	30	46
Laci	32	14	3	15	42	41	45
Lushnja	32	13	5	14	53	27	44
Tomorri	32	14	2	16	34	43	44
Bylis	32	12	6	14	38	35	42
Skenderbeu	32	12	6	14	36	47	42
Dinamo	32	11	8	13	34	34	41
Besa	32	12	5	15	42	44	41
Flamurtari	32	11	7	14	35	39	40
Shqiponja	32	11	4	17	32	53	37
Sopoti	32	10	5	17	34	57	35
Albpetrol	32	5	4	23	22	89	19

AUSTRIA

Austria Vienna	1	SV Salzburg	2
Tirol Innsbruck	0	Rapid Vienna	2
Lustenau	2	Graz AK	3
Ried	6	LASK Linz	1
Sturm Graz	2	Admira Wacker	0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sturm Graz	36	24	9	3	80	28	81
Rapid	36	18	8	10	42	36	62
Graz AK	36	18	7	11	53	33	61
Salzburg	36	16	8	12	48	33	56
LASK	36	17	4	15	67	58	55
Innsbruck	36	12	12	12	49	51	48
Austria	36	10	10	16	39	54	40
Ried	36	10	9	17	42	55	39
Lustenau	36	6	14	16	38	59	32
Admira	36	5	7	24	34	85	22

GREECE

OFI	1	Kalamata	0
Panathinaikos	7	Paniliakos	0
AEK	2	Xanthi	0
Ionikos	2	Panionios	2
Athinaikos	0	PAOK	5
Iraklis	4	Apollon	2
Ethnikos	1	Proodeftiki	0
Kavala	4	Panahaiki	0

Playing Monday
Veria v Olympiakos

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Olympiakos	33	29	1	3	88	25	88
Panathinaikos	34	28	1	5	90	24	85
AEK	34	22	8	4	61	30	74
PAOK	34	21	7	6	74	41	70
Ionikos	34	18	8	8	46	31	62
Iraklis	34	14	9	11	49	45	51
OFI	34	15	4	15	45	53	49
Xanthi	34	13	6	15	52	51	45
Veria	33	11	6	16	36	48	39
Paniliakos	34	9	9	16	41	54	36
Apollon	34	10	6	18	37	51	36
Panionios	34	10	6	18	41	54	36
Kavala	34	10	5	19	40	58	35
Proodeftiki	34	9	7	18	35	57	34
Ethnikos	34	10	3	21	27	51	33
Panahaiki	34	10	5	19	29	62	32
Kalamata	34	7	8	19	27	49	29
Athinaikos	34	6	9	19	23	55	27

The last three teams are relegated to division B.

HUNGARY

MTK Budapest	0	Haladas Szombathely	1
Ferencvaros	1	Ujpest	1
Szombathely	1	Gazszer Agard	3
Vasas Budapest	1	MTK Budapest	0
FC Vac	2	BVSC Budapest	0
Stadler Akaszto	0	Banyasz Siofok	0
Videoton	1	Zalaegerszeg	1
DVSC Debrecen	2	Diosgyor	1
Bekescsaba	1	Gyor Eto	1
Kispest Honved	5	Tiszakecske	0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ujpest	31	20	8	3	55	22	68
Ferencvaros	31	19	6	6	58	37	63
Vasas	31	18	6	7	60	34	60
Gyor	31	15	9	7	41	28	54
MTK	31	15	6	10	50	33	51
FC Vac	31	14	6	11	42	43	48
Gazszer	31	11	12	8	51	41	45
Zalaegerszeg	31	13	5	13	50	40	44
DVSC	31	12	7	12	42	46	43
BVSC	31	11	8	12	42	39	41
Diosgyor	31	11	7	13	41	37	40
Banyasz	31	11	7	13	35	38	40
Kispest	31	10	5	16	38	48	35
Haladas	31	8	8	15	35	44	32
Videoton	31	7	9	15	39	50	30
Bekescsaba	31	7	9	15	26	51	30
Tiszakecske	31	6	8	17	33	73	26
Stadler	31	3	10	18	24	58	19

ITALY

Atalanta	1	Juventus	1
Bologna	2	Lazio	1
Fiorentina	2	AC Milan	0
Inter Milan	4	Empoli	1
Lecce	1	Piacenza	3
Napoli	2	Bari	2
Parma	1	Brescia	3
AS Roma	2	Sampdoria	0
Vicenza	1	Udinese	3

Italy 1905

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Juventus	34	21	11	2	67	28	74
Inter	34	21	6	7	62	27	69
Udinese	34	19	7	8	62	40	64
Parma	34	15	12	7	55	39	57
Roma	34	16	11	7	67	42	59
Fiorentina	34	15	12	7	65	36	57
Lazio	34	16	8	10	53	30	56
Sampdoria	34	13	9	12	52	55	48
Bologna	34	12	12	10	55	46	48
Milan	34	11	11	12	37	43	44
Bari	34	10	8	16	30	45	38
Piacenza	34	7	16	11	29	38	37
Empoli	34	10	8	16	45	58	37
Vicenza	34	9	9	16	36	61	36
Brescia	34	9	8	17	45	63	35
Atalanta	34	7	11	16	25	48	32
Lecce	34	6	8	20	32	72	26
Napoli	34	2	8	24	25	76	14

PORTUGAL

Chaves	0	Academica	0
Farense	1	Rio Ave	0
Boavista	1	Campomaiorense	2
Maritimo	3	Porto	2
Vitoria Guimaraes	2	Vitoria Setubal	1
Braga	2	Sporting Lisbon	0
Salgueiros	2	Estrela Amadora	1
Benfica	7	Leca	1
Belenenses	1	Varzim	0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Porto	34	24	5	5	75	38	77
Benfica	34	20	8	6	62	29	68
Vitoria	34	17	8	9	42	25	59
Sporting	34	15	11	8	45	31	56
Maritimo	34	16	8	10	44	35	56
Boavista	34	15	10	9	54	31	55
Estrela	34	14	8	12	41	42	50
Salgueiros	34	13	10	11	48	44	49
Rio Ave	34	12	10	12	43	43	46
Braga	34	11	12	11	48	49	45
Camp'orense	34	11	7	16	53	58	40
Leca	34	10	8	16	29	52	38
Vitoria	34	10	7	17	38	43	37
Farense	34	8	13	13	41	50	37
Academica	34	8	12	14	27	41	36
Chaves	34	10	5	19	31	55	35
Varzim	34	6	11	17	26	51	29
Belenenses	34	5	9	20	22	52	24

SPAIN

Sporting Gijon	0	Deportivo Coruna	3
Tenerife	3	Valencia	2
Mallorca	0	Real Sociedad	1
Barcelona	1	Salamanca	4
Racing Santander	0	Atletico Madrid	1
Real Madrid	1	Real Betis	0
Valladolid	0	Espanyol	0
Athletic Bilbao	1	Real Zaragoza	0
Celta Vigo	2	Merida	0
Compostela	1	Oviedo	0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Barcelona	38	23	5	10	78	56	74
Athletic Bilbao	38	17	14	7	52	42	65
Real Sociedad	38	16	15	7	60	37	63
Real Madrid	38	17	12	9	63	45	63
Mallorca	38	16	12	10	55	39	60
Atletico	38	16	12	10	79	56	60
Celta Vigo	38	17	9	12	54	47	60
Real Betis	38	17	8	13	49	50	59
Valencia	38	16	7	15	58	52	55
Espanyol	38	12	17	9	44	31	53
Valladolid	38	13	11	14	36	47	50
Deportivo	38	12	13	13	44	46	49
Real Zaragoza	38	12	12	14	45	53	48
Racing	38	12	9	17	46	55	45
Salamanca	38	12	9	17	46	46	45
Tenerife	38	11	12	15	44	57	45
Compostela	38	11	11	16	56	66	44
Oviedo	38	9	13	16	36	51	40
Merida	38	9	12	17	33	53	39
Sporting Gijon	38	2	7	29	31	80	13

Barcelona and Athletic Bilbao to play European Cup.

Real Madrid to play in UEFA Cup or European Cup depending on outcome of European Cup final on May 20.

Real Sociedad. Atletico Madrid and Celta Vigo to play in UEFA Cup.

Mallorca to play European Cup Winners' Cup (as beaten Spanish Cup finalists)

Merida and Sporting Gijon relegated automatically

Oviedo to play Las Palmas and Compostela to play Villareal in relegation play-offs.

YUGOSLAVIA

Proleter Zrenjanin	1	Obilic	1
Zeleznik	2	Crvena Zvezda	1
Rad	4	Buducnost	0
Mladost Lucani	2	Partizan	0
Cukaricki	0	Zemun	0
Hajduk Kula	2	Vojvodina	0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Obilic	33	27	5	1	72	19	86
Crvena Zvezda	33	27	3	3	86	22	84
Partizan	33	22	4	7	73	38	70
Vojvodina	33	13	7	12	57	63	49
Rad	33	12	6	14	35	39	42
Zemun	33	10	9	14	38	50	39
Hajduk	33	10	5	18	32	51	35
Buducnost	33	8	9	16	27	53	33
Zeleznik	33	9	5	19	43	60	32
Proleter	33	10	2	21	40	64	32
Cukaricki	33	9	4	20	32	45	31
Mladost	33	9	3	21	25	54	30

Mladost are relegated, while Cukaricki will contest Radnicki Kragujevac for a place in the new 16-team First Division.

Following top five clubs of Division B are promoted directly to the First Division: OFK Beograd Belgrade, Sartid Smederevo, Pristina, Spartak Subotica, Radnicki Nis.

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CUP WINNERS CUP REPORT

Chelsea 1 Stuttgart 0
Zola 70

ITALIAN GENIUS GIVES CHELSEA THE CUP

It was an English triumph, achieved in Sweden. But the brilliant sheen of Italian craftsmanship was stamped into the silver European Cup-winners' Cup which Gianfranco Zola took 30 seconds to win last night.

Never before has a European final been won and a man-of-the-match award been so cleanly pinched by a substitute who spent half a minute on the pitch and fatally pierced the opposition's iron curtain.

With his 70th minute rocket which soared through the Stockholm night into the roof of the net, Zola ensured that, for generations, the children of Chelsea fans will be christened Gianfranco.

Twenty minutes later, Dennis Wise lifted his third trophy in 12 months and while thousands of cameras captured the moment, the rest of Europe noted that Chelsea's metamorphosis from a fashionable suburb into a centre of Continental footballing importance was complete.

People like Ken Bates and Colin Hutchinson, the men who have not only sanctioned the buying of real class but actually sought it, deserve praise.

The little United Nations enclave, the Uruguayan, the Norwegian, the Dutchman, the Romanian, the Scot, the Dutchman and, yes, a few hardy Englishmen, can consider itself a centre of excellence.

But it is to the Italians that honour must be paid.

With only his second touch last night, Zola applied the killer touch for which Krasimir Balakov, his opposite number in the Stuttgart team, had been striving all night.

After a shaky start, Chelsea were never out of it but as the fascinating game unfolded it became clear that Gianluca Vialli needed all his wits about him in order to win the 13th major trophy of his fabulous career.

He and Tore Andre Flo were man-marked throughout, with the talented Murat Yakin, sweeping behind the markers Thomas Berthold and Thomas Schneider.

Vialli and the less experienced Flo simply had to run, twisting and turning the two Germans until they were ragged.

First, Schneider was seen off when Stuttgart coach Joachim Low recognised that the two vicious shots which Dennis Wise sent whizzing narrowly wide represented evidence that Vialli's plan was working.

Flo was left to run the new man, Jochen Endress, about for a bit before making way for the best surprise which came in the form of Zola.

Given that Roberto Di Matteo finished Wimbledon in last season's FA Cup Final and also put the Coca-Cola Cup final out of Middlesbrough's reach and that Zola struck crucially with a header in the Cup-winners' Cup semi-final against Vicenza last month, who would have bet against an Italian scoring for Chelsea night?

But after the season of misery Zola has had? After the injury which had seemed to rule him out of the final until he trained last Friday? After starting the game on the bench?

Therein lies the truth of what Vialli believes that Italian footballers are winning footballers.

He himself has been proven as a remarkable man who, in partnership with Graham Rix, has been able not only to continue but sharpen his playing level at days short of his 34th birthday while coping magnificently with the demands of management.

Chelsea showed patience and intelligence last night and made themselves some luck in a game when Stuttgart often looked more menacing.

So much of the sweating could have been avoided if Di Matteo had tucked away the fifth-minute chance which simply begged to be taken. Sent in by Dan Petrescu, who was eventually red-carded for his crude lunge at Yakin, the Italian international crudely dragged his left-foot shot wide.

It signalled a spell of almost half an hour during which Stuttgart could have won the game had they showed an ounce of Zola's ruthlessness.

Jonathan Akpoborie opted to pass in the penalty box after beating Mike Duberry and Chelsea cleared the danger after Balakov and Marco Haber had played pass the parcel.

Balakov directed a fine corner right to the leaping of Fredi Bobic who headed just wide and with 18 minutes gone, Bobic almost made amends by sending Balakov through to force a terrific save from Ed De Goey.

The absence of Zola was diminishing Chelsea's creative menace and so was the loss of Graeme Le Saux through injury, despite the fact that Danny Granville appeared to mature as each minute passed.

At one stage there were more Stuttgart players than Chelsea men firing on all cylinders but gradually big-game players like Wise and Gustavo Poyet began to muscle in on the action.

The Uruguayan and the Chelsea captain spent the minutes on either side of half time conducting a shooting competition with Wise peppering both posts and Poyet asking a stern question of Franz Wohlfahrt with a raging volley.

Their efforts galvanised the vast ranks of blue and white support throughout the Rasunda Stadium. Like soldiers responding to a bugle call, the Chelsea players fed on the raw energy which was being transmitted down to them from the crowd.

Increasingly, it began to appear that a war of attrition was being won and only the question of the killer touch remained. That came with 20 minutes left when Wise made Zola's golden opportunity and the little Sardinian launched the ball into the net and the noise into the stratosphere.

Nothing really ruffled Chelsea from then on and instead of a tense end, the game produced a chaotic finale.

Petrescu was sent-off but while Chelsea maintained otherwise calm heads, Stuttgart began to lose theirs.

Wohlfahrt was caught galavanting upfield when Chelsea cleared a late corner and, as Granville ran half the length of the pitch with an open goal in front of him and the goalkeeper careering along behind him, the entire Chelsea bench urged him to shoot.

He was not aware of the opportunity. In the circumstances perhaps no one should blame him and in the end it did not matter.

In the final seconds, Gerhard Poschner became the fourth man sent-off in the last two UEFA Finals for running most of the length of the pitch to abuse referee Stefano Braschi.

When Braschi blew his whistle the Germans collapsed in misery all over the pitch while Vialli's men danced and drank in the sheer joy of the moment.

Zola was immediately named man of the match and that deal Chelsea struck to buy his image rights and the thousands of items of Zola memorabilia which will be sold, suddenly looks like the deal of the century.

Or was that the deal which first took this little genius to Stamford Bridge in the first place?

Afterwards, the little Italian couldn't wipe the smile off his face when he said: "I had a two-inch tear in my groin. Treatment from my specialist, Mimmo Pezza, helped me get fit.

"Normally it takes a month to recover from an injury like this, but I have done it in a fortnight. It is a miracle. At one time it looked as though all my dreams would be destroyed and I wouldn't play in the Final. Now you see me with this smile on my face and it won't go away."

It showed just what this win meant to the Italians as Chelsea became the first English team to win this trophy twice after their 1971 triumph.

It was a moment of great personal triumph for Zola, and he admitted: "I was disappointed not to be selected for the original line-up. I was fit to play.

I was surprised I wasn't included and it hurt to be left out. But I used my frustration in the most positive way and I got the reward for all the hard work I put in — and the heartache."

Zola — who received a $30,000 car, which he donated to charity, for being named man of the match — added: "The moment when the ball hit the net was incredible. My celebrations were horrible, but I could not control myself. Suddenly, everything I wanted had come true.

"It was one of the most beautiful moments of my career. The sensation I had in my heart will never leave me."

Pierluigi Casiraghi's hopes of joining Chelsea moved a step closer yesterday when he announced he was leaving Lazio. The clubs have yet to agree a fee for the $12million-rated striker.

EUROPEAN CUP PREVIEW

AIRPORT FIASCO SORTED OUT

UEFA lifted its threat to move tomorrow night's European Cup Final away from Amsterdam after the Dutch government stepped in at the last moment to save embarrassed faces, including its own.

"In short, the final of the Champions League is going ahead in Amsterdam," Dutch football association (KNVB) chairman Jeu Sprengers told a hastily arranged news conference.

The impasse concerned the travel arrangements for the teams and supporters of finalists Juventus and Real Madrid.

A conflict between the government and Schiphol airport looked like wrecking Amsterdam's chance of hosting Europe's showpiece football event for the first time since 1962.

Noise restrictions at the airport limit the number of flights to 380,000 per year. The airport's slot coordinator said Schiphol's schedule was full, while the transport ministry said it could not permit more flights.

In the end, the government's side yielded.

"The cabinet is of the opinion that this unforeseen circumstance requires a special solution bearing in mind the threat to public order during the final and the fact that an alternative, so soon before May 20, is not available," the ministry said in a statement said.

The government said it would allow up to 90 extra flights which would fall outside the normal limitations.

"The flights will fall into the same category as those of a friendly head of state or for military operations," it added.

Gerhard Aigner, secretary general of UEFA, football's ruling body in Europe, said he was happy with the solution and pleased the government had stepped in.

Aigner wrote to the Dutch F.A. saying the problems were jeopardising Amsterdam's chances of hosting the final.

The threat of moving the final had been a real one, Aigner said.

"We had made certain arrangements for alternatives which we don't have to follow up now. My colleagues were working very hard on the matter until just half an hour ago when we told them to stop," he said.

One option ruled out early on was the possibility of a two-legged final in Turin and Madrid.

"We wanted to have a one-match solution," Aigner added.

UEFA had considered moving the match to an earlier time and had also been in talks with venues in London, Paris and Munich, possibly with a Sunday kick-off. The main difficulties were a shortage of hotel accommodation.

Aigner would not be drawn on whether the debacle had affected the Netherlands' chances of hosting another final.

"We all have to learn from this. I think the government will also realise that certain rules that have been introduced may be difficult for the long-term planning of big international events," he said.

Sprengers was adamant the matter was an isolated incident and had no bearing on the capacity of the country to accommodate fans in 2000 when the Netherlands and the Belgians co-host the European Championships.

"This is a one-off event. It is not like a tournament," he said, adding the F.A. would be looking at potential problems in the coming months.

'REAL' HAPPY

Real Madrid players said they were happy that the venue for the European Cup final would remain the Amsterdam Arena.

"Changing now would be bad for everyone," striker Fernando Morientes said. "When I heard that the Dutch government were getting involved I became much more optimistic."

UEFA had threatened to move the final from Amsterdam because of limits imposed on the number of flights into the city's Schiphol airport. Only the intervention of the Dutch government, which lifted the restrictions, ensured that the match could go ahead.

"I'm glad everything has been settled," midfielder Victor Sanchez said. "Many people have spent a lot of effort making arrangements and it gave me a lot of worries that people could arrive miles away from Amsterdam."

Real Madrid president Lorenzo Sanz suggested staging a two-leg, home-and-away final to resolve the problem and said he had the agreement of opponents Juventus. UEFA turned down the suggestion.

Sanz called the awarding of the European Cup final to Amsterdam "an important error" by UEFA.

Meanwhile Madrid defender Fernando Hierro limped out of the club's training session with a sprained ankle, leaving club officials doubtful over the Spanish international's fitness for the final.

"We are going to see how things progress over the next few hours because at the moment it is too soon to decide anything," a club spokesman said.

Hierro was named last week in Spain's 22-man World Cup squad.

Fernando Hierro: In doubt for tomorrow night.

World Cup History

Part 1

By Micky Brock

URUGUAY 1930

As often appears the case, ideas concerning European and world football have emanated from France.

The thought came from two Frenchman — Henri Delauney and Jules Rimet, after whom the original World Cup trophy, now proudly won outright and owned by Brazil, was named.

Rimet was the head of the French Football Federation for thirty years, spanning from its inception in 1919 and beyond the outbreak of global conflict, and was the President of FIFA from 1920 to 1954. If anyone ever cared about our great game, Jules Rimet was the man. He was, himself, more of a persuader, a diplomat, whilst it can be said of Delauney, he was the 'worker' in the partnership, the perfect foil to the sometimes intransigent Rimet.

In Amsterdam, 1928, Delauney issued a resolution that the 'World Cup' be set on foot at once, which was immediately adopted by those present because football had outgrown the confines of being just and 'Olympic' sport when being considered internationally. The only question that needed answering, where was it to be played?

The were five options: Uruguay, Italy, Holland, Spain and Sweden.

Uruguay, with its tiny population of just two million, offered to pay all the travelling and hotel expenses of the competing nations AND build a brand new stadium in which to host the tournament, to be built in the centre of Montevideo, and the timing would also commemorate 100 years of independence.

Those present had no further thought than to award the first ever World Cup tournament to a country that had shown so much enthusiasm to embrace the idea, and so it was that Uruguay was where the greatest single sporting show on earth was to play its opening night.

GROUP ONE

France	4	Mexico	1 (h/t 3-0)
Argentina	1	France	0 (h/t 0-0)
Chile	3	Mexico	0 (h/t 1-0)
Chile	1	France	0 (h/t 0-0)
Argentina	6	Mexico	3 (h/t 3-0)
Argentina	3	Chile	1 (h/t 2-1)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Argentina	3	3	0	0	10	4	6
Chile	3	2	0	1	5	3	4
France	3	1	0	2	4	3	2
Mexico	3	0	0	3	4	13	0

GROUP TWO

Yugoslavia	2	Brazil	1 (h/t 2-0)
Yugoslavia	4	Bolivia	0 (h/t 0-0)
Brazil	4	Bolivia	0 (h/t 1-0)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Yugoslavia	2	2	0	0	6	1	4
Brazil	2	1	0	1	5	2	2
Bolivia	2	0	0	2	0	8	0

WIN ME

GROUP THREE

Romania	3	Peru	1 (h/t 1-0)
Uruguay	1	Peru	0 (h/t 0-0)
Uruguay	4	Romania	0 (h/t 4-0)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Uruguay	2	2	0	0	5	0	4
Romania	2	1	0	1	3	5	2
Peru	2	0	0	2	1	4	0

GROUP FOUR

United States	3	Belgium	0 (h/t 2-0)
United States	3	Paraguay	0 (h/t 2-0)
Paraguay	1	Belgium	0 (h/t 1-0)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
United States	2	2	0	0	6	0	4
Paraguay	2	1	0	1	1	3	2
Belgium	2	0	0	2	0	4	0

SEMI-FINALS

Argentina 6 **United States** 1
Monti, Scopelli,Brown
Stabile 2, Peucelle 2

Argentina: Botasso, Della Torre, Paternoster, J.Evaristo, Monti, Orlandini, Peucelle, Scopelli, Stabile, Ferreira (cpt), M.Evaristo.

United States: Douglas, Wood, Moorhouse, Gallacher, Tracey, Auld, Brown, Gonsalvez, Patenaude, Florie (cpt), McGhee.

Uruguay 6 **Yugoslavia** 1
Cea 3 — Seculic
Anselmo 2
Iriarte

Uruguay: Ballesteros, Nasazzi (cpt), Mascheroni, Andrade, Fernandez, Gestido, Dorado, Scarone, Anselmo, Cea, Iriarte.

Yugoslavia: Yavocic, Ivkovic (cpt), Milhailovic, Arsenievic, Stefanovic, Djokic, Tirnanic, Marianovic, Beck, Vujadinovic, Seculic.

The stage was now set for a magnificent game of football between the host nation and a South American neighbour — Argentina, who had to hire ten ferry boats to carry the ecstatic supporters across the River Plate (it wasn't even enough).

Many thousands of fans packed the streets of Buenos Aires in an attempt to voyage across the mighty river but it wasn't until late on the eve of the final that they managed to do so. This proved insufficient too and as many again lined the quay to wish them well for the tiny journey, letting off fireworks and raising a chant of: 'Argentina si, Uruguay no!'

The gates to the stadium were opened at 8.00am but within two hours the ground was packed with over 90,000 souls, even forcing the gates and ticket offices to be closed well before the two o'clock kick-off time.

Twelve minutes into the game and the right-winger, Pablo Dorado, gave the home side the lead, much to the joy of the locals, but it was to be short-lived when, firstly Peucelle equalised and then a hotly disputed 'offside' Argentine goal was netted by Stabile, much to the chagrin of Uruguayan captain Nasazzi.

Ten minutes after the break and Montevideo was again, metaphorically, alight when Pedro Cea dribbled through to score the equaliser for Uruguay before outside-left Santos Iriarte put the home side in front once more.

Anselmo, unfit for the match, could do nothing but celebrate when his understudy in the final, Castro, fired a shot high into the roof of the net with just a few seconds remaining to leave Uruguay the eventual winners of the inaugural Jules Rimet World Cup trophy by the score of four goals to two.

The crowd celebrated long and loud into the early hours of the next day and beyond.

The birth of the World Cup has been quick, painless and now the baby was to grow big and strong over the next four years, when it was next to be held, in Europe this time — Italy to be more precise.

THE FINAL

Uruguay 4 **Argentina** 2
Dorado, Cea, Iriarte, Castro — Peucelle, Stabile

Uruguay: Ballesteros, Nasazzi (cpt), Mascheroni, Andrade, Fernandez, Gestido, Dorado, Scarone, Castro, Cea, Iriarte.

Argentina: Botasso, Della Torre, Paternoster, J. Evaristo, Monti, Suarez, Peucelle, Varallo, Stabile, Ferreira (cpt), M.Evaristo.

ITALY 1934

First Round

Italy	7	United States	1 (h/t 3-0)
Czech	2	Romania	1 (h/t 0-1)
Germany	5	Belgium	2 (h/t 1-2)
Austria	3	France	2 (h/t 1-1, 1-1 aet)
Spain	3	Brazil	1 (h/t 3-1)
Switzerland	3	Holland	2 (h/t 2-1)
Sweden	3	Argentina	2 (h/t 1-1)
Hungary	4	Egypt	2 (h/t 2-1)

Second Round

Germany	2	Sweden	1 (h/t 1-0)
Austria	2	Hungary	1 (h/t 1-0)
Italy	1	Spain	1 (1-0, 1-1 aet)
Italy	1	Spain	0 (h/t 1-0 replay)
Czech	3	Switzerland	2 (h/t 1-1)

SEMI-FINALS

Czech 3 **Germany** 1
Nejedly 2, Krcil — Noack

Czech: Planicka (cpt), Burger, Ctyroky, Kostalek, Cambal, Krcil, Junek, Svoboda, Sobotka, Nejedly, Puc.

Germany: Kress, Haringer, Busch, Zielinski, Szepan (cpt), Bender, Lehner, Siffling, Conen, Noack, Kobierski.

Italy 1 **Austria** 0
Guaita

Italy: Combi (cpt), Monzeglio, Allemandi, Ferraris IV, Monti, Bertolini, Guaita, Meazza, Schiavio, Ferrari, Orsi.

Austria: Platzer, Cisar, Seszta, Wagner, Smistik (cpt), Urbanek, Zischek, Bican, Sindelar, Schall, Viertel.

THIRD PLACE MATCH

Germany 3 **Austria** 2
Lehner 2, Conen — Seszta 2

The trend that had been set in Uruguay four years earlier was to continue, the host nation was to win the tournament.

The Italian fans had not been anywhere near as excited about the World Cup in their own backyard and even the Final itself, played in Rome, saw the stadium not full to capacity. The Stadio Torino was not the ideal venue as the pitch was smaller than regulation size and many rued the fact the match was not played in the north of the country, where more than one fan believed the final would have been better attended and a far greater atmosphere generated.

The Czech side began by playing their 'Danubian style' of football (short-passing), and even though both teams showed great effort, there was to be no scoring until the last 20-minutes of the game.

Puc, the Czech player who had previously left the field with cramp, came back on to take a corner. The ball came back to him and he launched a long-range effort at the Italian goalkeeper Combi's right. He, in turn, dived late and the Czechs were on their way to victory, or so they thought.

With just eight minutes of regulation play left, Italian fans were left with that sinking feeling before their hearts were once more pounding to a different beat as Raimondo Orsi, the left-winger, got the ball from Guaita and ran through a tiring defence, feinted with his left and shot with his right foot to level the score. The sad part for the 'away' team was that Orsi attempted to repeat the feat the next day for the cameras and even with no goalkeeper in sight, could not exact the same result!

It came down to extra-time and with Guaita and Schiavio constantly switching positions, at the insistence of coach Pozzo, it paid big dividends for the Italians. The second time they swapped positions, the winning goal was secured. A hobbling Meazza received the ball out on the right wing and, with acres of space allotted him by the Czechs, he centred to Guaita who found Schiavio with a pass.

Schiavio, limbs aching from an exhaustive 97-minutes of action, rounded the Czech defender Ctyroky and planted his shot past the despairing grasp of keeper Planicka.

He later confided that the strength he called upon to will his tired body onto greater efforts was "the strength of desperation."

And so it was, two World Cup tournaments played, two host nation wins and the soccer carnival was next to be played in France, 1938 — where the very idea was conceived.

THE FINAL

Italy 2 **Czechoslovakia** 1 (aet)
Orsi, Schiavio — Puc

Italy: Combi (cpt), Monzeglio, Allemandi, Ferraris IV, Monti, Bertolini, Guaita, Meazza, Schiavio, Ferrari, Orsi.

Czech: Platzer, Cisar, Seszta, Wagner, Smistik (cpt), Urbanek, Zischek, Bican, Sindelar, Schall, Viertel.

FRANCE 1938

First Round

Switzerland	1	Germany	1 (h/t 1-1, 1-1 aet)
Switzerland	4	Germany	2 (h/t 2-0 replay)
Cuba	3	Romania	1 (h/t 0-1, 3-3 aet)
Cuba	2	Romania	1 (h/t 0-1 replay)
Hungary	6	Dutch East Indies	0 (h/t 4-0)
France	3	Belgium	1 (h/t 2-1)
Czech	3	Holland	0 (h/t 0-0, 0-0 aet)
Brazil	6	Poland	5 (h/t 1-0, 1-1 aet)
Italy	2	Norway	1 (h/t 1-0, 1-1 aet)

Second Round

Sweden	8	Cuba	0 (h/t 4-0)
Hungary	2	Switzerland	0 (h/t 1-0)
Italy	3	France	1 (h/t 1-1)
Brazil	1	Czech	1 (h/t 1-1, 1-1 aet)
Brazil	2	Czech	1 (h/t 0-1 replay)

SEMI-FINALS

Italy 2 **Brazil** 1
Colaussi Romeo
Meazza (pen)

Italy: Olivieri, Foni, Rava, Serantoni, Andreolo, Locatelli, Biavati, Meazza (cpt), Piola, Ferrari, Colaussi.

Brazil: Walter, Domingas Da Guia, Machados, Zeze, Martin (cpt), Alfonsinho, Lopez, Luisinho, Peracio, Romeo, Petesko.

Hungary 5 **Sweden** 1
Szengeller 3 — Nyberg
Titkos, Sarosi

Hungary: Szabo, Koranyi, Biro, Szalay, Turai, Lazar, Sas, Szengeller, Sarosi (cpt), Toldi, Titkos.

Sweden: Abrahamson, Eriksson, Kjellgren, Almgren, Jacobsson, Svanstroem, Wetterstroem, Keller (cpt), H.Andersson, Jonasson, Nyberg.

THIRD PLACE MATCH

Brazil 4 **Sweden** 2
Romeo — H.Jonasson
Leonidas 2 — Nyberg
Peracio

Brazil: Batatoes, Domingas Da Guia, Machados, Zeze, Brandao, Alfonsinho, Robert, Romeo, Leonidas (cpt), Peracio, Patesko.

Sweden: Abrahamson, Eriksson, Nilssen, Almgren, Linderholm, Svanstroem (cpt), Berssen, H.Andersson, Jonasson, A.Andersson, Nyberg.

Italy were to defend the trophy they won at home four years earlier and set-up a list of 'firsts' in the competition if they were successful, but with the storm clouds of war gathering, no-one suspected that this was to be the last World Cup finals for twelve years.

The Italians, already known for their 'robust' style of football, played the game the way they knew best but that wasn't to say that Hungary had no experience. No less than six of their team had previous World Cup matches under their belts and they knew this would be no easy game for them to win.

With six-minutes gone the Italians produced a sweeping move that left their Hungarian counterparts dumbfounded. Serantoni cleared the ball to the deep-lying Biavati, who went the length of the field before passing on to Meazza. The ball was moved quickly to Colaussi to slip in and score.

Sarosi helped a ball from Sas on to Titkos who levelled the match at 1-1 in less than sixty-seconds after the restart, helping to turn this game into one the most fluent exhibitions of the sport to date, considering that in 1938, the prestige of becoming 'World Champions' was something not to be sniffed at.

Fifteen minutes later Meazza again supplied the ball, for Piola this time, his aim was true and Italy retook the lead. With ten minutes to go before the break, the balding pate of Ferrari was seen to point out the unmarked Colaussi to his captain Meazza. Colaussi swept onto the ball on the right wing and left Polgar for dead as he sped past to net his second of the match. If it looked bad for Hungary at this point, worse was to follow.

False hope was given to the Magyar supporters when Sarosi reduced the lead to a single goal twenty minutes later, but from there on in, it wasn't to be their day. The Italians had Hungary's right teetering throughout most of the match and when they finally struck again, it left no hope of a recovery. Ten minutes were left when Biavati and Piola swapped one-twos before the latter cheekily backheeled the ball for the former to smash into the net.

Not only had Italy won the Cup for the first time as a 'non-host' nation, they were the first to defend it too, all done with a style so rarely seen these days.

THE FINAL

Italy 4 **Hungary** 2
Colaussi 2, Piola 2 — Titkos, Sarosi

Italy: Olivieri, Foni, Rava, Serantoni, Andreolo, Locatelli, Biavati, Meazza (cpt), Piola, Ferrari, Colaussi.

Hungary: Szabo, Polgar, Biro, Szalay, Szucs, Lazar, Sas, Vincze, Sarosi (cpt), Szengeller, Titkos.

WORLD CUP GROUP A

BY STUART JONES AND MICKY BROCK

Brazil

Previous Finals
1930 1st Rd
1934 1st Rd
1938 SF (3rd)
1950 Final (RU)
1954 QF
1958 Champions
1962 Champions
1966 1st Round
1970 Champions
1974 2nd Rd (4th)
1978 2nd Rd (3rd)
1982 2nd Rd
1986 QF
1990 2nd Rd
1994 Champions

* They are the only nation to have participated in ALL the World Cup Finals.

HOSTED WORLD CUP - 1950

Pelé: Brazil's favourite son.

Best - Champions
1958 Gilmar, D Santos, Bellini, Orlando Pecanha, N Santos, Zito, Didi, Garrincha, Vava, Pele, Zagalo
(Coach - Feola)

1962 Gilmar, D Santos, Oliveira, Zozimo, N Santos, Zito, Didi, Garrincha, Vava, Amarildo, Zagalo
(Coach - Moreira)

1970 Felix, C Alberto, Brito, Piazza, Everaldo, Clodoaldo, Gerson, Jairzinho, Tostao, Pele, Rivelino
(Coach - Zagalo)

1994 Taffarel, Jorginho (Cafu), M Santos, Aldair, Branco, Mazinho, M Silva, Dunga, Zinho (Viola), Bebeto, Romario
(Coach - Parreira)

Qualifying path: Qualified as Champions

Coach: Mario Zagallo
Colours: Gold shirt with green trim, blue shorts.

Record in World Cup finals:

Qfd	P	W	D	L	F	A
15	73	49	12	12	159	69

Last Copa America: Champions (plus Confederation Cup Champions)

Odd point: Jairzinho scored in each game played by Brazil in 1970 (total of 7 goals).

In World Cup finals Brazil have only met Scotland from their pool for 2 wins 1 draw

1974: Rd 1 - Brazil 0 Scotland 0 (Woldstadian Frankfurt, West Germany).

1982: Rd 1 - Brazil 4 (Zico 33 Oscar 48 Eder 64 Falco 86) Scotland 1 (Narey 18) (Benito Villamarin, Seville, Spain).

1990: Rd 1 - Brazil (Muller 81) Scotland 0 (Delle Alpi, Turin, Italy).

Schedule (Australian time)			SBS	
v Scotland		(Saint Denis)	June 11	1.00am live (Thursday)
v Morocco		(Nantes)	June 17	4.30am live (Wednesday)
v Norway		(Marseilles)	June 24	4.30am live (Wednesday)

Brazil once again are looking for only one thing, victory. They should be able to get through the group stage with relative ease. In the second round they could be paired with Chile (in Paris) which would make an interesting battle. Preparation has not been perfect but the side always lift for the World Cup.

Official Squad of 22:

Keepers: Taffarel, Carlos Germano, Dida
Defenders: Cafu, Aldair, Goncalves, Junior Baiano, Ze Roberto, Roberto Carlos, Marcio Santos
Midfielders: Dunga, Doriva, Rivaldo, Leondardo, Denilson, Flavio Conceicao, Cesar Sampaio, Giovanni
Forwards: Romario, Edmundo, Bebeto, Ronaldo.

Dave Mitchell says: World Champions.
World Cup Betting: 4.00
Romario heads Brazil's sick-list

Injury Crisis

Brazil have been hit with a major injury crisis which could rip the heart out of their World Cup squad.

Star striker Romario and key midfielder Sergio Sampaio, both named in the starting XI to face Scotland in the opening game of the tournament, are causing major worries for coach Mario Zagallo.

And important squad members Marcio Santos and Sergio Concescau are also giving team doctor Livio Toledo cause for concern.

Sampaio is the most worrying, with a muscle injury which was troubling him last season flaring up again after he defied Zagallo's request by playing a club match.

Ronaldo

And Romario will be examined before the squad begin training in Brazil, with insiders expressing fears that a muscular injury to his right leg could keep him out of the team to face Scotland. Concescau is suffering from a similar problem, while Santos is nursing an injury to his left leg.

Inter Milan's Brazilian soccer star Ronaldo was received in private by Pope John Paul II.

The footballer, who was accompanied by his mother, had long been hoping for a private audience with the Pope, following his arrival in Italy last summer.

With the injuries to his Brazilian team mates, perhaps he was asking for divine intervention although he has stated that he is ready to meet his **'marker'**!

Mario Zagallo last week told everyone exactly how it was going to be in Paris on June 10 and, more precisely, the Brazilian manager announced not only his squad but also named the 11 men who will play against Scotland in the opening match of the World Cup.

It was an act of a man with some style. As it happens, this Wednesday Craig Brown will reveal the names of the players Scotland want for the two warm-up matches in the United States later this month. He will not formally announce his World Cup squad, let alone a team, until later.

Zagallo has clearly won the first propaganda battle. He is stating that Brazil are the holders of that famous little trophy, this is my best team and I'm now going to bed and let the enemy endure a few sleepless nights. Nothing less should be expected of champions.

Teams are now considered secret until the moment the lines are handed over to the referee less than an hour before the match. We are led to believe that this allows master tacticians to influence the course of the match. At some levels of the game, it merely reflects which players have got out of the pub in time.

Mr Bertie Auld, when manager of Partick Thistle, once went a step further. He deliberately only named 10 players for a match at Aberdeen. "It's a small pitch, it will give us more room in which to play," he said.

Only later did we discover the truth. One of his side worked as a schoolteacher and his headmaster had refused to give him time off work. He duly played but Mr Auld thought that by not naming him he could keep it secret. The manager probably told him not to score a goal, either.

Zagallo has already been criticised on the grounds that by naming his team he is demeaning his opponents. In fact, he has merely been open and forthright. He is hardly likely to have second thoughts after becoming aware of the precise identity of the luckless individual who will mark Ronaldo.

Champions are there to be shot at and, occasionally, gunned down. The Brazilian might well rue his decision if Scotland get the kind of result that would explode around the world.

Norway

Previous Finals
1938 1st Rd
1994 1st Rd

Best: 1st Round

Host: Never

Qualifying path: Top of European Group 3:

Pld	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
8	6	2	0	21	2	20

Norway 2 Azerbaijan 0 - Norway 3 Hungary 0 - Switzerland 0 Norway 1 - Norway 1 Finland 1 - Hungary 1 Norway 1 - Finland 0 Norway 4 - Azerbaijan 0 Norway 1 - Norway 5 Switzerland 0.

Top Scorer in Qualifying: Stale Solbakken 4

Coach: Egil Olsen (also coached 1994 USA World Cup side)

Colours: Red shirts, Black shorts.

Record in World Cup finals:

Qfd	P	W	D	L	F	A
2	4	1	1	2	2	3

Last European Championships: Did not qualify for finals

Odd point: On May 30 1997 Norway defeated Brazil 4-2.

Norway have never met any of the teams in their group before in the World Cup Finals.

Schedule (Australian time)			SBS
v Morocco		June 11	Montpellier 4.30am live (Thursday)
v Scotland		June 17	Bordeaux 1.00am live (Wednesday)
v Brazil		June 24	Marseille 4.30am live (Wednesday)

The Norwegian's have a distinctly English flavour with many of their stars playing in the Premier League. Egil Olsen's side came through a fairly easy European group, aided by Switzerland's and Hungary's loss of form. The team disappointed in USA '94 but could grab second spot this time around, however, they will not progress much further than that.

Dave Mitchell says: Very stuffy side, always difficult to play against.

World Cup Betting: 41.00

Norway's Egil "Drillo" Olsen, who was also in charge at the 1994 World Cup finals, is one of only four managers at France 98 who has remained in charge since the last championships.

He was an individualist as a player, representing Norway 16 times, but he also stood out in other ways, including his Marxist-Leninist political philosophies and his love of poker.

His coaching ideas, like his political philosophies, have been based on collective effort rather than individual brilliance.

His teams have traditionally been physically strong, determined and courageous under pressure and have worked together as a cohesive unit.

Olsen guided the national Under-21 side for five years and was eventually appointed national coach of the senior team in October 1990.

When he took over, Norway had many part-time players in their squad and were not considered a major force in international football, but when Norway finished top of their World Cup qualifying group for USA 94, ahead of 1988 European champions Holland and 1990 World Cup semi-finalists England, their profile was raised.

Norway did not make it through their first-round group despite beating Mexico. They drew with Ireland and lost to eventual runners-up Italy, but Olsen insisted it was a successful campaign in their first finals appearance since 1938.

Failing to qualify for Euro 96 was another setback, but Olsen then led them to France 98 as they won their qualifying group by eight points from Hungary, scoring 21 goals in eight matches.

Norway may be facing World Cup holders Brazil in their first-round group, but they beat the four-time world champions 4-2 last year. Scotland and Morocco, although good international sides, are far from unbeatable.

When the draw was made in Marseille last year, Olsen said: "I was disappointed that we were the ninth of the European teams to be drawn and it is going to be very hard against Brazil, although if we repeat our performance when we beat them 4-2 in a friendly earlier this year then we have a good chance. I know all about Scotland but I know nothing about Morocco."

Ole-Gunnar Solskjaer is dubbed "the baby-faced assassin", a player whose choirboy looks disguise a fierce will-to-win.

Solsjkaer's experience with Manchester United is likely to prove vital as Norway seeks to improve on their record of never having made it past the first round in the World Cup finals.

The 25-year-old, who is ironically allergic to grass, first came to prominence with a flurry of goals for Norwegian club side Molde, prompting United manager Alex Ferguson to move in for him in 1996.

He scored 18 league goals in 25 starts in his first English Premiership season and has again impressed this year, even though he has had to share first-team opportunities with the likes of Andy Cole and Teddy Sheringham.

Solskjaer's rise has been a rapid one. Just four years ago he was playing non-league football in Norway for a tiny club called Clausenengen FK before crowds of around 200.

Ole-Gunnar Solskjaer: Man Utd & Norway.

WORLD CUP COMPETITION ✻ Details on Page Two ✻

WORLD CUP GROUP A

By the start of the World Cup qualifying campaign, Solskjaer was Norway's first-choice spearhead. Then Manchester United stepped in and Solskjaer quickly became known around the world.

Although he looks frail, Solskjaer is actually physically very strong. His father was a multiple Norwegian wrestling champion and the strength is in his genes.

He is hard to dispossess, is good with both feet and has an acute tactical awareness on the pitch. He also has that innate toughness, as he proved in a recent match against Newcastle, where he elected to commit a blatant foul and be sent off rather than see United concede a goal.

Still, though, Solskajer's place in the starting line-up in France is far from certain. Olsen has a surfeit of striking riches and all his forwards will need to be on their toes.

Morocco

Previous Finals
1970 1st Rd
1986 2nd Rd
1994 1st Rd

Best: 2nd Rd

Host: Never

Qualifying path: Exempt Rd 1 African section

Rd 2 Winner Group 5

P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
6	5	1	0	14	2	16

Morocco 4 Sierre Leone 0 - Ghana 2 Morocco 2 - Gabon 0 Morocco 4 - Sierre Leone 0 Morocco 1 - Morocco 1 Ghana 0 - Morocco 2 - Gabon 0

Top Scorer in Qualifying: Salheddine Bassir - 4

Coach: Henri Michel

Colours: Green shirts, green shorts

Record in World Cup finals:

Qfd	P	W	D	L	F	A
3	10	1	3	6	7	13

African Nations: Quarter Finalists

Odd point: With Cameroon, they are participating in the World Cup Finals for a record fourth time (for African nations). Moroccon born Juste Fontaine holds the record for the most goals in any one World Cup finals series. He scored 13 goals in 1958, for France!

Morocco have never met any of the teams in their group before in the World Cup Finals.

WIN ME

Schedule (Australian time)			SBS
v Norway		June 11	Montpellier 4.30am live (Thursday)
vBrazil		June 17	Nantes 4.30am live (Wednesday)
v Scotland		June 24	Saint Etienne Delayed telecast (Wed)

Morocco lost all three matches last time around but this looks like being a very different experience. Coach Henri Michel took France to Mexico in 1986 and Cameroon to the USA in 1994. How much he can get out of players like Bassir and Raghib could be the key to their progression this campaign.

Dave Mitchell says: Unpredictable side

World Cup Betting: 151.00

Morocco coach Henri Michel is no stranger to the World Cup having guided his native France and Cameroon with contrasting fortunes.

The former Nantes star, who was capped 58 times by his country, steered France to third place in Mexico 12 years ago with a 4-2 play-off triumph against Belgium.

Drafted into the hot seat at the last minute by Cameroon in 1994, the 50-year-old Michel had to endure heavy losses by eventual champions Brazil and Russia and beat a hasty retreat.

When Michel inherited Morocco three years ago the national team was in the doldrums following defeats by Burkina Faso and Ivory Coast which prevented them competing at the 1996 African Nations Cup.

The transformation of the Atlas Lions — the Atlas mountain range forms the spine of the North African country — has been remarkable with only one competitive defeat under Michel.

That came at the recent African Nations Cup in Burkina Faso with holders South Africa winning an absorbing tactical battle 2-1 to qualify for the semi-finals.

Highlights of his reign include a World Cup victory over Abedi Pele-led Ghana and victories against arch-rivals Egypt in the qualifying and final rounds of the Nations Cup.

Nantes won the French championship three times and the cup once during the years Michel served them and he was coach when France struck gold at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics.

Mustapha Hadji is the midfield playmaker of Morocco and one of three national stars who line up with Spanish club Deportivo la Coruna.

A tall, slim footballer with a ponytail, the 26-year-old star could have been playing for World Cup hosts France instead of the outsiders in a group including Brazil, Norway and Scotland.

Morocco-born Hadji rejected an offer to join the French under-21 team for which he was eligible having spent most of his life with his parents in the Lorraine region.

He was also pursued by Morocco five years ago and decided the chance to play at the 1994 World Cup in the United States was too good an opportunity to miss.

Hadji, defender Noureddine Naybet and striker Salaheddine Bassir form the spine of the Atlas Lions and playing together for Deportivo has helped them develop an uncanny understanding.

The former Nancy player, who arrived in Coruna via Sporting Lisbon of Portugal, experienced mixed fortunes at the recent African Nations Cup in Burkina Faso.

His last-minute winner against Egypt in a pool game was widely considered the best goal of the tournament as he sent an overhead kick flying into the Pharaohs net.

It was the only goal eventual champions Egypt conceded in 570 minutes and helped Hadji forget some lacklustre displays with his performance against South Africa in the quarter-finals particularly disappointing.

Scotland

Previous Finals
1954 1st Rd
1958 1st Rd
1974 1st Rd
1978 1st Rd
1982 1st Rd
1986 1st Rd
1990 1st Rd

Best: 1st Rd

Host: Never

Qualifying path: Best European runners up, 2nd in Group 4 (Austria top of this group)

P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
10	7	2	1	15	3	23

Top Scorer in Qualifying: Kevin Gallacher - 6

Coach: Craig Brown
Colours: Navy blue shirts, white shorts.

Record in World Cup finals:

Qfd	P	W	D	L	F	A
7	20	4	6	10	23	35

European Championships: Rd 1

Odd point: In 1974 Scotland went undefeated (the only side to do so in the tournament that year), yet did not make the second round.

Scotland have only played Brazil before in the World Cup Finals from the sides in Group A, for just one draw and two Losses;

1974 Rd 1 - Brazil 0 Scotland 0 (Woldstadian, Frankfurt, West Germany).
1982 Rd 1 - Brazil 4 (Zico 33 Oscar 48 Eder 64 Falco 86) Scotland 1 (Narey 18) (Benito Villamarin, Seville, Spain).
1990 Rd 1 - Brazil (Muller 81) Scotland 0 (Delle Alpi, Turin, Italy).

Schedule (Australian time)			SBS
v Brazil		June 11	Saint-Denis 1.00am live (Thursday)
v Norway		June 17	Nantes 4.30am live (Wednesday)
v Morocco		June 24	Saint Etienne Delayed telecast (Wed)

Scotland are probably best known, in World Cup terms, for never having made it past round one.

In qualifying, their defence held firm but it will be their goal scoring ability that will come under most scrutiny in France 98.

The team do not have the big star pull of a Dalglish or Law anymore but, like coach Craig Brown, they will work hard without being spectacular.

Perhaps they have the best chance of upsetting Brazil as they play them in the opening game of the tournament, a match that has caused surprises in previous World Cups.

Dave Mitchell says: The side have only booked their hotel for a week! (More like a weekend! Ed)

World Cup Betting: 141.00

SCOTLAND'S WORLD CUP SQUAD

(subject to change)

Billy Dodd, Tommy Boyd, Craig Burley, Colin Calderwood, John Collins, Christian Dailly, Billy Dodds, Simon Donnelly, Gordon Durie, Matt Elliott, Kevin Gallacher, Scot Gemmill, Andy Goram, Colin Hendry, David Hopkin, Darren Jackson, Eoin Jess, Paul Lambert, Jim Leighton, Brian McAllister, Gary McAllister, Stuart McCall, Ally McCoist, John McGinlay, Billy McKinlay, Tosh McKinlay, Alan McLaren, Jackie McNamara, Alan Main, John Spencer, Neil Sullivan, David Weir, Derek Whyte.

Kevin Gallacher

Ally McCoist: Left out of squad (latest).

WORLD CUP
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WORLD CUP GROUP B

Italy

Previous Finals
1934 Champions
1938 Champions
1950 1st Rd
1954 1st Rd
1962 1st Rd
1966 1st Rd
1970 Finalists (Runners Up)
1974 1st Rd
1978 2nd Rd (4th)
1982 Champions
1986 2nd Rd
1990 Semi Finalists (3rd)
1994 Finalists (Runners Up)

HOSTED WORLD CUP - 1934, 1990.

Maldini

Best: Champions

1934 - Combi, Monzeglio, Allemandi, Ferraris IV, Monti, Bertolini, Guaita, Meazza, Schiavio, Ferrari, Orsi.
(Trainer: Pozzo)

1938 - Olivieri, Foni, Rava, Serantoni, Andreolo, Locatelli, Biaviti, Meazza, Piola, Ferrarri, Colaussi.
(Trainer: Pozzo)

1982 - Zoff, Cabrini, Scirea, Gentile, Collovati, Oriali, Bergomi, Tardelli, Conti, Rossi, Graziani (Altobelli) (Causio).
(Trainer: Bearzot)

Qualifying path: Through play-offs for second placed teams after finishing runner-up to England in European Group Two

Pld	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
8	5	3	0	11	1	18

Moldova 1 Italy 3 - Italy 1 Georgia 0 - England 0 Italy 1 - Italy 3 Moldova 1 - Poland 0 Italy 0 - Italy 3 Poland 0 - Georgia 0 Italy 0 - Italy 0 England 0.

Play-Offs: Russia 1 Italy 1 - Italy 1 Russia 0
(2-1 to Italy on aggregate)

Top scorer in qualifiers: Fabrizio Ravanelli - 3

Coach: Cesare Maldini

Colours: Blue shirts, white shorts.

Record in World Cup finals

Qfd	P	W	D	L	F	A
13	61	35	14	12	97	59

Last European Championships: 1st Round.

Odd point: Italy lost just seven international games in the whole of the 1930s, winning two World Cups and the Olympic Games tournament in between

Italy have met all three Group B opponents in previous World Cup final series;

v Chile
1962 Rd One - Chile 2 (Ramirez 74, Toro 87) Italy 0 (Estadio Nacional, Santiago, Chile).
1966 Rd One - Italy 2 (Mazzola 10, Barison 80) Chile 0 (Roker Park, Sunderland, England).

v Cameroon
1982 Rd One - Italy 1 (Garziani 60) Cameroon 1 (M'Bida 61) (Balaidos, Vigo, Spain).

v Austria
1934 Rd Two/Semis - Italy 1 (Guita 19) Austria 0 (San Siro, Milan, Italy).
1978 Rd Two - Italy 1 (Rossi 13) Austria 0 (Monumental, Buenos Aires, Argentina).
1990 Rd One - Italy 1 (Schillaci 77) Austria 0 (Olimpico, Rome, Italy).

Schedule (Australian time)	SBS	
v Chile (Bordeaux)	June 12	1.00am live (Friday)
v Cameroon (Montpellier)	June18	4.30am live (Thursday)
v Austria (Saint-Denis)	June 24	Delayed telecast. (Wed)

For Italy this is about doing one better than last time. Their disappointing qualifying campaign must be put behind them.

Coach Maldini also needs to get more goals from his strikers. One slip-up in this first phase and they might have to play Brazil in the next round, avoid this and there is a great chance USA 94 final combatants could meet once more in the biggest arena of all.

Rale Rasic says: Italy know how to qualify, and they know how to progress past these early stages.

Betting: 9.00

Baggio

Austria

Previous Finals
1934 Semi Finalists (4th)
1954 Semi Finalists (3rd)
1958 1st Rd
1978 2nd Rd
1982 2nd Rd
1990 1st Rd

Hosts: Never hosted the World Cup.

Best: Semi Finalists (3rd)

Qualifying path: Winner European Group 4

Pld	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
10	8	1	1	17	4	25

Austria 0 Scotland 0 - Sweden 0 Austria 1 - Austria 2 Latvia 1 - Scotland 2 Austria 0 - Austria 2 Estonia 0 - Latvia 1 Austria 3 - Estonia 0 Austria 3 - Austria 1 Sweden 0 - Belarus 0 Austria 1 - Austria 4 Belarus 0.

Top scorer in qualifying: Anton Polster - 7

Coach: Herbert Prohaska

Colours: White shirts, black shorts.

Record in World Cup finals

Qfd	P	W	D	L	F	A
6	26	12	2	12	40	43

Last European Championships: Did not Qualify

Odd point: In 1954 Austria were 3-0 down in their quarter-final with Switzerland, they then scored 5 goals in 5 minutes and won 7-5 (all the goals in the match coming in the space of an hour).

Austria have met both Italy and Chile before in the World Cup finals;

Italy
1934 Rd Two/Semis Italy 1 (Guita 19) Austria 0 (San Siro, Milan, Italy).
1978 Rd Two - Italy 1 (Rossi 13) Austria 0 (Monumental, Buenos Aires, Argentina).
1990 Rd One - Italy 1 (Schillaci 77) Austria 0 (Olimpico, Rome, Italy).

Chile
1982 Rd One - Austria 1 (Schacher 21) Chile 0 (Carlos Tartiere, Oviedo, Spain).

Austria are a solid team and got to the World Cup after two tough batles with Sweden in particular. They could finish runners up but not even coach Prohaska would be thinking of lifting the World Cup trophy.

Rale Rasic says: Better than the last 25 years, but they will only cause an upset or two.

Betting: 91.00

Del Piero

Schedule (Australian time)	SBS	
v Cameroon (Toulouse)	June 12	4.30am live (Friday)
v Chile (Saint Etienne)	June 18	1.00am live (Thursday)
v Italy (Saint Denis)	June 24	Delayed telecast (Wed)

Cameroon

Previous Finals
1982 1st Rd
1990 Quarter Finals
1994 1st Rd

Hosts: Never hosted the World Cup.

Best: Quarter Finalists

Qualifying path:
Winner African Group 4
(Exempt from Round 1 games)

Pld	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
6	4	2	0	10	4	14

Togo 2 Cameroon 4 - Cmeroon 0 Angola 0 - Cameroon 1 Zimbabwe 0 - Cameroon 2 Togo 0 - Angola 1 Cameroon 1 - Zimbabwe 1 Cameroon 2.

Top scorer in qualifying: Patrick Mboma - 5

Coach: Jean Manga Onguene

Colours: Yellow shirt with some green, red shorts.

Record in World Cup finals

Qfd	P	W	D	L	F	A
3	11	3	4	4	11	21

Last African Nations: Quarter finalists.

Odd point: The player who could star for Cameroon this finals series does not play in Africa or Europe, striker Patrick Mboma plays for Gambo Osaka in Japan's J-League!

Cameroon has only met Italy in the World Cup finals before out of the teams in Group B;
v Italy 1 draw
1982 Rd 1 Italy 1 (Graziani 60) Cameroon 1 (M'Bida 61) Balaidos, Vigo, Spain.

Signori

The old guard are gone, can the Lions still roar? Even Roger Milla has not been allowed to help the coaching side of things this time around. They were undefeated in qualifying but results since have not been promising. They could struggle in this group.

Rale Rasic says: They are the darkhorses of the group stage once more.

Betting: 101.00

Vieri

WORLD CUP COMPETITION * *Details on Page Two* *

WORLD CUP GROUP B

CAMEROON CONTINUED

Schedule (Australian time)	SBS	
v Austria (Toulouse)	June 12	4.30am live (Friday)
v Italy (Montpellier)	June 18	4.30am live (Thursday)
v Chile (Nantes)	June 23	11.30pm live (Tuesday)

Chile

Previous Finals
1930 1st Rd
1950 1st Rd
1962 Semi Finals (3rd)
1966 1st Rd
1974 1st Rd
1982 1st Rd

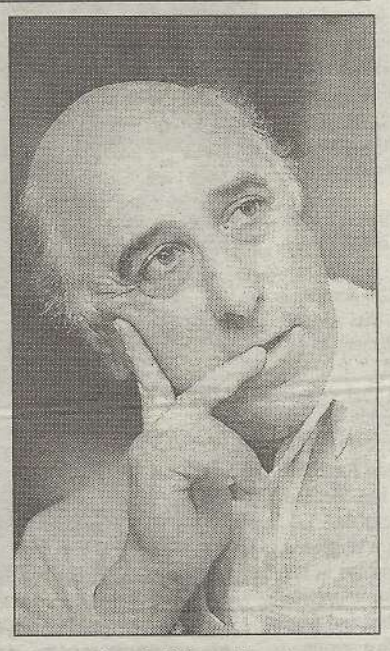
Hosts: 1962

Best: Semi Finalists (3rd)

Qualifying path: Finished 4th in the South America Group

Pld	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
16	7	4	5	32	18	25

Venezuala 1 Chile 1 - Chile 4 Ecuador 1 - Colombia 4 Chile 1 - Paraguay 2 Chile 1 - Chile 1 Uruguay 0 - Argentina 1 Chile 1 - Peru 2 Chile 1 - Bolivia 1 Chile 1 - Chile 6 Venezuala 0 - Ecuador 1 Chile 1 - Chile 4 Colombia 1 - Chile 2 Paraguay 1 - Uruguay 1 Chile 0 - Chile 1 Argentina 2 - Chile 4 Peru 0 - Chile 3 Bolivia 0.



Coach Nelson Acosta

Top scorer in qualifying: Ivan Zamorano - 12

Coach: Nelson Acosta

Colours: Red shirts, blue shorts

Record in World Cup finals

Qfd	P	W	D	L	F	A
6	21	7	3	11	26	32

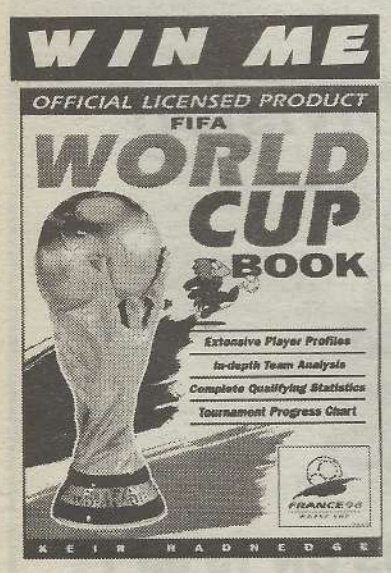
Last Copa America: 1st Rd (last in group)

Odd point: Roberto Rojas, the Chilean goal keeper in 1989, was banned for life after feigning injury against Brazil in a World Cup qualifier that year. Due to this incident Chile were banned from trying to qualify for USA '94.

Chile have only met Italy (twice) in the World Cup finals out of the teams in Group B.

Tapia

Carlos Tejas



v Italy
1962 Rd One - Chile 2 (Ramirez 74, Toro 87) Italy 0 (Estadio Nacional, Santiago, Chile)
1966 Rd 1 Italy 2 (Mazzola 10, Barison 80) Chile 0 (Roker Park, Sunderland, England).

CHILE'S 25-MAN SQUAD

Chilean coach Nelson Acosta has named a 25-man squad for the World Cup finals in France.

Acosta said he was selecting three more players than required in case any of them suffered an injury before travelling to France on May 29.

Squad:

Goalkeepers: Nelson Tapia (Universidad Catslica), Marcelo Rammrez (Colo Colo), Carlos Tejas (Coquimbo).

Defenders: Francisco Rojas, Pedro Reyes (Colo Colo); Ronald Fuentes, Cristian Castaneda, Ricardo Rojas, Mauricio Aros (Universidad de Chile); Miguel Ramirez, Javier Margas (Universidad Catslica); Moisis Villarroel (Wanderers), Jorge Gomez (Cobreloa).

Midfielders: Luis Musrri, Clarence Acuna (Universidad de Chile); Nelson Parraguez, Fernando Cornejo (Universidad Catslica); Jose Luis Sierra (Colo Colo); Fabian Estay (Toluca, Mexico); Marcelo Vega (New York MetroStars).

Forwards: Ivan Zamorano (Inter Milan); Marcelo Salas (River Plate, Argentina); Juan Carreno (Huachipato); Manuel Neira (Colo Colo); Rodrigo Barrera (Universidad de Chile).

Salas

and Javier Margas, midfielders Marcelo Vega and Clarence Acuna and reserve striker Juan Carreno.

Chile, which leaves for France on May 29, is training at Puerto Velero, around 450 kilometres north of Santiago.

Acosta has reinstated midfielder Fabian Estay, who was under threat of being axed because he played for his club Toluca in the Final of the Mexican championship.

The Uruguayan-born coach had threatened to exclude any player who missed the deadline for reporting but later relented.

Schedule (Australian time)	SBS	
v Italy (Bordeaux)	June 12	1.00am live (Friday)
v Austria (Saint-Etienne)	June 18	1.00am live (Thursday)
v Cameroon (Nantes)	June 23	11.30pm live (Tuesday)

Like the Russian side in USA '94, this team is beset by internal squabbling. If the problems can be overcome (in the past local players have even resorted to strike action) then Chile have some chance of progressing through to the next round.

Of course, a Salas special against, maybe, Brazil in the second round would go down a treat back home in Chile.

Rale Rasic says: Their progress depends on their two superstars up front.

Betting: 126.00

Chilean marksman Ivan Zamorano, who twisted his knee said he was fit and resumed training this week and expected to play against Argentina in the forthcoming friendly.

"I don't think that there will be any problem in facing Argentina," he said. "It only bothers me when I twist my leg, but even then it is not a lot."

However, Zamorano, who has missed most of his country's recent matches through injury, said he was not be able to play in a training match behind closed doors against first division club La Serena.

Zamorano's striking partner Marcelo Salas, who left the camp because his wife was ill, did face La Serena but was then allowed to return to Santiago, coach Nelson Acosta said.

Acosta has several other injury worries, the victims including defenders Pedro Reyes

Estay arrived in a private jet chartered by his club, which beat Necaxa 5-2 to take the title.

Zamorano

WORLD CUP BOOK COMPETITION

1. The editor's decision is final and no correspondance will be entered into.
2. ALL correct entries received by Monday. April 20 will be placed in a hat and the first drawn shall be deemed the winner.
3. Entries MUST be made on the official coupon supplied on page 2 of the issue (no faxes, photocopies etc. will be accepted).
4. Simply fill in the missing letters, print your name, address and telephone number in the space produced and send to us at the usual address and don't forget to mark your envelope with 'Competition' in the top left hand corner.
5. Don't forget to post your entry in!

As you will surely have noticed already, we at 'ABSW Towers' bring you yet another **'FREE'** to enter competition, with the help of our good friends at **Penguin Books**.

Dotted throughout the pages of this issue, you will recall we reviewed these publications a couple of weeks ago, and right here of course, are the three books you can win simply by answering the question on the entry form on page 2.

This prize will cover everything you need to know about World Cup 98, from the 'littlies' in the family to us, the older 'wrinkles', it's all here.

The conditions of entry remain the same as usual: you MUST use the official entry form provided, photocopies, faxed items etc. will not be admitted to the draw, and you have until the first post on Monday 25th May to get your entries in.

The best part about it is that we are giving the opportunity to win **ALL THREE** books when we pull the name out of the hat, but what makes it better than that, we're not just pulling out one name, we're pulling out TWO in every issue for the next four weeks!

Be sure to answer the question we pose each week, fill in your details (PRINTED PLEASE), and get them into us at the usual address.

Mark the top left hand corner of your envelope with 'Competition', especially if you send your details in late, so that we can immediately single out your entries.

As ever, the Editor's decision is FINAL, no correspondence will be entered into and this forms part of your agreement in entering.

Over the four issues in question, we will be making EIGHT families very happy, and very knowledgeable, as they sit down, watch the competition unfold AND each of them can test each other on varying aspects of each side playing.

So, while you are enjoying your football reading, remember it is **ONLY ABSW** that gives the readers this opportunity, you're always the most informed and, thanks to our very good friends at **Penguin Books**, that remains the case here.

ABSW and Penguin Books, what a combination!

STOP PRESS

Look out for even more competitions in the next couple of weeks, as if this one wasn't enough! If it's not in ABSW, it probably didn't happen!!).

Italian Affair

By Joe Russo

JUVE ON TRACK FOR DOUBLE

Having clinched their 25th championship recently, Juventus look set to also take out the Champions League trophy on Thursday morning (Australian time).

In their centenary year it would indeed be some double. On recent form it is certainly not beyond them.

Only two other Italian teams have managed this feat. In 1965 Inter, coached by the late legendary Helenio Herrera, and in 1994 Milan, under their current coach Fabio Capello.

Juventus are a team that can never be underestimated. Earlier in the season it looked as if both the Serie A Scudetto and the Champions League Trophy were beyond their capabilities this season.

Marcello Lippi has blended a fine team of youth and experience. Two consecutive championships is indeed some effort for a team that so regularly sells its best players in the close-season.

SACCHI'S NEW CONTRACT

Former national coach Arrigo Sacchi has accepted a new two year contract to join Atletico Madrid. Sacchi's contract must surely make him on of the highest paid coaches in Europe.

He takes over from Serb Radomic Antic and he will be the second Italian coach in Spain, joining Claudio Ranieri at Valencia.

Sacchi's contract has a unique clause to combat the often volatile and unpredictable nature of club president Jesus Gil y Gil.

On top of the approx A$3 million per-season, he will receive compensation of about A$18 million should he be sacked in the first season.

It is certainly a novel way of making sure that you are not sacked before your contract expires.

Furthermore, Sacchi will employ Pietro Carmignani as his assistant coach and Vincenzo Pincolini as team trainer.

Both men are Sacchi's personal choice and both will also have a 'penalty clause' in their contracts should they be sacked.

Atletico Madrid have had a disappointing season by their standards this year, so expectations of Sacchi and his team will be substantial.

MONDONICO TO TORINO

Serie B Club Torino have appointed Emiliano Mondonico as their coach for next season. Torino look set to be promoted into the Serie A next year, while Mondonico's current club Atalanta will do the reverse, and drop back to Serie B.

For Mondonico it will be a return to the club he coached a few seasons ago.

He will take over in the close-season from current coach Eddie Reja. Reja himself took over in the first month of the season when Graeme Souness was sacked.

Meanwhile Torino's link to Australia seems to be continuing. It is understood that Carlton may come to some sort of arrangement to be their nursery in Australia.

WHAT HAPPENED AT MILAN?

For Milan's last home game at the San Siro, fans showed their true feelings. The team bus was blocked by protesting fans and they were forced to make a back entry to the stadium.

Slogans such as "go to work" were sung out and many of the banners and posters around the stadium called for the return of former greats, such as a Franco Baresi and Marco Van Basten.

At one stage during the game, most of the 40,000 fans present, stood up and showed their backs to the players.

Given their dismal displays over the last two years, one could hardly blame them!

Milan will 'put the broom' through the place in this close-season, with a lot of changes to be made to the playing staff.

However, rumours that coach Fabio Capello will lose his job are unfounded. Some reports have linked former player Carlo Ancelotti to the club. Ancellotti has coached Parma for the last two seasons.

Capello was the man who guided Milan to four championships in his first five seasons at the helm. He then went to Real Madrid and won the title in Spain in his first season.

He is certainly not a man who is used to losing and was lured back to Milan, despite having two years left on a three-year contract with Real.

Milan president Silvio Berlusconi spent very big on luring Capella back last year after Arrigo Sacchi was shown the door.

Simply put, he will be in no hurry to sack Capello despite this poor season.

One poor season cannot take away from his outstanding past record. Capello is an outstanding coach and will be staying on.

It has been also rumoured that current international midfielder Dino Baggio will be joining Milan from Parma. He would be a valuable acquisition, but of more interest will be the big names that are departing.

Franco Baresi: Fans are wishing the golden days of his era could return... now!

Dejan Savicevic, Patrick Kluivert and George Weah already have their bags packed while a number of others will join them shortly.

SIGNORI TO ROMA?

Sampdoria's Giuseppe Signori, according to one report, will be joining Roma next year.

However, it has been denied by Roma president Franco Sensi and by Signori himself.

He joined Sampdoria this year mid-season after been consistently benched at his former club Lazio.

During his years at Lazio he was club captain and a favourite son for the supporters.

Furthermore, Signori has a close rapport with current Roma coach Zdenek Zeman who coached him at both Lazio and Foggia previously.

Given the rivalry in the city of Rome (between Roma and Lazio), players and coaches rarely cross the river Tibec, and play for the other side, especially having already played for their rivals.

Coach Zeman did it and was loudly criticised. It is unlikely that Signori will follow in his favourite coach's footsteps.

SUPER SERENI

At 23 and with a struggling club such as Piacenza, goalkeeper Matteo Sereni has certainly proved himself as one of Serie A's better custodians.

A couple of weeks ago, when Piacenza held Inter to a scoreless draw, he hit the headlines because of some outstanding saves from Ronaldo. In reality, the modest and un-assuming Sereni has been in great form all year.It will be interesting to see where he ends up next season — he was only on-loan at Piacenza from Sampdoria.

One gets the impression that the larger club may want their boy back again, but if they don't, there are certainly a number of others who do!

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SOUTH AMERICA

— Compiled by Mario Etchart —

DRAMA AND TROUBLE IN LATIN AMERICA

BRAZIL

Vasco da Gama were awarded a 2-0 win in what is believed to be the first walkover at the Maracana stadium after rivals Botafogo failed to turn up for a Carioca (Rio de Janeiro state) championship match.

Botafogo had announced they would not be playing because they were angry at a change in the fixture list. They said they should be playing Friburgense instead.

Despite this, the Rio de Janeiro federation went ahead with the game as planned. The ticket offices were opened and an official attendance of 171 was registered, with some fans saying they had paid unaware of Botafogo's protest.

Vasco took the field as usual and after waiting half an hour organised a training session on the famous turf.

The competition, which is in its third stage, is already running two weeks late because an earlier game between Vasco and Flamengo was postponed at three days notice after Flamengo refused to play.

It now runs a serious risk of not finishing at all because from Tuesday, Flamengo, Botafogo and Vasco will all have players with Brazil's World Cup squad.

The Paulista (Sao Paulo state) championship has also been discredited but at least it finished in style with an dramatic clash between Sao Paulo and Corinthians.

Sao Paulo took the title after Rai, playing his first and only match in the competition, inspired them to a 3-1 win in the final's second leg and a 4-3 aggregate win.

Rai scored one goal and brilliantly set up another as he returned from a five-year spell with Paris St Germain in France. He was able to play after Sao Paulo directors discovered that the tournament does not have a transfer deadline — a fact that many felt damaged the credibility of the competition.

Sao Paulo and won and enthralling match to claim the Paulista championship. But there was also trouble as Botafogo failed to turn up for a match in Rio de Janeiro's chaotic Carioca championship while the big match of the year in Paraguay, where the championship has already been disrupted by a strike, was called off because of rioting fans.

PARAGUAY

Rioting fans forced the much-awaited meeting of Cerro Porteno and Olimpia, Paraguay's two biggest clubs, to be abandoned after Olimpia had two goals disallowed in the first-half.

Referee Epifranio Gonzalez called off the match with the score at 1-1 as missiles rained onto the field at the start of the second-half. Fans also clashed inside and outside the ground and several injuries were reported.

It was the latest blow to a sagging tournament.

Olimpia had dropped only two points in their first seven games but then lost the lead to Cerro Porteno on a weekend when clubs fielded youth and reserve teams because of a strike by the professionals.

Olimpia's youth side was beaten 1-0 while Cerro Porteno won their encounter to go top of the Apertura (opening) tournament, the first stage of the championship.

The strike then left the country without any football at all for the next two weeks. Cerro Porteno have since extended their lead to five points over Olimpia.

ARGENTINA

Velez Sarsfield opened a three-point lead with three matches left in the Clausura (closing) championship as they beat Ferro Carril Oeste 4-1 while rivals Gimnasia-La Plata lost 3-1 at a revived Boca Juniors.

Claudio Caniggia, who is hoping to be called up for Argentina's World Cup squad, had an inspired first-half for Boca but limped off at half-time with a bruised leg.

Boca have scored seven goals in winning their last two matches, but have no chance of taking the title after an otherwise miserable tournament which has seen the departure of coach Hector Veira.

The Clausura is the second of the two tournaments played in the Argentine season.

CHILE

Universidad Catolica, Colo Colo and Universidad de Chile, the country's three major clubs, appear to have had their minds elsewhere in this year's championship.

Between them, the trio will supply the bulk of Chile's World Cup squad and their players seem to have been saving their efforts for France.

As a result, there are some unfamiliar names at the top of the table.

Concepcion, Rangers and Huachipato share the lead with 13 points each from six matches as the championship goes into a two-month break for the World Cup.

Colo Colo are fourth with 11 points while both Universidad teams have nine points.

BOLIVIA

Wilstermann stayed top of the Apertura (opening) tournament despite losing their unbeaten record in a 1-0 defeat by The Strongest.

The Strongest cut Wilstermann's lead to one point and were joined on 23 points by Oriente Petrolero, who beat local rivals Real Santa Cruz 1-0.

The Apertura is the first stage of the championship, which follows the calendar year. The winners play the champions of the Clausura (closing), played in the second half of the year, to decide the title.

BRAZIL PICKS GIOVANNI OVER JUNINHO

The inclusion of midfielder Giovanni and defender Marcio Santos was the only surprise in Brazil's World Cup squad, which has taken coach Mario Zagallo more than 100 players and over 60 matches to build.

Both appeared to be out of the running after being overlooked by Zagallo during the last year.

But a resurgence in their form, coupled in Giovanni's case to a serious injury to rival contender Juninho, persuaded Zagallo to change his mind when he named the squad Tuesday, a month before the deadline.

Juninho, who broke his leg in February and played a comeback match for Atletico Madrid last week, has made a remarkably quick recovery.

But Zagallo, who omitted Juninho in favor of Barcelona's Giovanni, might have had the memories of Zico in 1986 and Romario four years later at the back of his mind.

Both played shortly after serious injuries and on both occasions the risk back-fired.

Zico, now assistant to Zagallo, came on as a substitute in two matches but missed a crucial penalty in a quarter-final against France as Brazil was eliminated. Romario played one half in 1990 but caused tension in the camp by insisting on consulting his private physiotherapist.

In defence, Marcio Santos appeared to have ruined his chances with his performances during last year's 4-2 defeat by Norway.

But he redeemed himself with recent performances for Sao Paulo, though he may have been helped by the jittery performance of the back four during the recent friendly defeat against Argentina.

"Although we left him out of the team, we continued observing him and he has played superbly in the last few months," Zagallo said.

Brazil has dozens of players capable of performing at international level but in the event Zagallo has gone for the tried and trusted — or in some cases not so trusted — rather than gambling on up-and-coming talent.

Seven of the 22 players are over 30, none are under 20 and nine were on the squad at the 1994 World Cup.

Of those, goalkeeper Taffarel, defender Aldair, midfielder Dunga and striker Romario were regulars in the team and will start the opening game against Scotland, Zagallo having taken the unusual initiative of announcing his side five weeks early.

Zagallo, who was assistant to Carlos Alberto Parreira in 1994, took over immediately after the USA 94 for his third stint as national team coach, the second having seen him lead Brazil to victory back in 1970.

During his latest reign, Brazil played 63 matches and Zagallo said that he had fielded more than 100 different players in his search for his ideal team.

Many others, however, believe they have been hard done by after barely being given a chance to show their worth.

Vasco da Gama's veteran central defender Mauro Galvao and goalkeepers Ronaldo Giovanelli(Fluminense) and Andre (Internacional) are among those who have not been given a single chance despite outstanding performances for their clubs.

Meanwhile, Corinthians forward Marcelinho Carioca, a player who can work magic from free-kicks and corners, Paris St. Germain's elegant midfielder Rai and Santos striker Muller, who has already played three World Cups, have been given one outing each in the last four years.

Barcelona striker Sonny Anderson was given a handful of games but may also feel desperately unlucky to be left behind.

On the other hand, many believe that Junior Baiano is too erratic to play in the heart of the defense, that goalkeeper Taffarel is past his best and that right-back Cafu is in a rut of bad form.

Romario has touched the ball only a handful of times on his last two outings while Dunga, expected to captain the team, gave the wrong example when he was sent-off in futile style against Germany in March.

Bebeto,34, was also included despite a tumultous last 18 months in which he seems to have spent more time negotiating transfers than playing football.

But once the inevitable arguments of the merits of his selections have died down, Zagallo will simply be happy to get training under way.

"For four years, we have played games after just one training session during which you can't achieve anything," he said. "We have been forced to make concessions to the clubs. Even so, we have only lost three times."

Team coordinator Americo Faria said he did not know how many of the ten European-based players would be available next week but said: "It looks better than we first thought."

Brazil's World Cup squad is...

Goalkeepers: Taffarel (Atletico Mineiro), Carlos Germano (Vasco da Gama), Dida (Cruzeiro).

Defenders: Cafu and Aldair (AC Roma, Italy), Goncalvez (Botafogo), Junior Baiano and Ze Roberto (Flamengo), Roberto Carlos (Real Madrid), Marcio Santos (Sao Paulo).

Midfielders: Dunga (Jubilo Iwata, Japan), Doriva (Porto, Portugal), Rivaldo (Barcelona, Spain), Leonardo (AC Milan, Italy), Denilson (Sao Paulo), Flavio Conceicao (Deportivo La Coruna, Spain), Cesar Sampaio (Ana Sato Kogyo, Japan), Giovanni (Barcelona, Spain).

Strikers: Romario (Flamengo), Edmundo (Fiorentina, Italy), Bebeto (Botafogo), Ronaldo (Inter Milan, Italy).

GOMEZ TAKES NEW APPROACH

Hernan Dario Gomez has replaced Colombia's previously idealistic approach to international soccer with a more pragmatic attitude.

Predecessor Francisco Maturana, who took Colombia to the 1990 and 1994 World Cups, always believed that his team's function was as much to put on a show as to win matches.

Gomez, who took over three years ago, has rather less romantic priorities.

"This has not been a team which knocks the ball around, it's not a team that creates lots of chances but it has been an effective team and the Europeans haven't been able to beat us," he said.

"In short tournaments such as the World Cup, it's not a case of who scores the most goals.

It's a case of who concedes the fewest."

Gomez, 41, began his coaching career with Atletico Nacional and under him the club became the first Colombian side to win the South American Libertadores Cup in 1989.

At the last two World Cups he was assistant to Maturana and he also coached the Colombia team which took part in the 1992 Olympics in Barcelona.

He took over from Maturana, after Colombia's ill-fated 1994 World Cup campaign.

Gomez has first-hand experience of the unique difficulties of coaching the national team of one of the world's most violent countries.

He was a close friend of central defender Andres Escobar, who was murdered in Medellin shortly after returning home from the 1994 World Cup.

Gomez's younger brother Gabriel was dropped from the team in the same competition after death threats were faxed to the team hotel demanding that he be replaced by Herman Gaviria.

Such pressures come with the territory when you are Colombia coach, but few expect Gomez to remain in his post once the World Cup has finished, whatever the team's performance.

NO PAY NO PLAY MONSIEUR VALDERRAMA

If Colombian captain Carlos Valderrama wants to play in the World Cup next month, he's got a tax bill with the French government to settle first.

Alvaro Fina, president of the Colombian Soccer Federation, said last week that Valderrama would not play unless he pays $110,000 in unpaid taxes for 1988-91, when he was with the Montpellier club.

Valderrama, who now plays for the Miami Fusion in MLS, had promised to settle the bill this week.

The 36-year-old Valderrama has said the World Cup in France would be his last appearance with his national team.

Certainly he is one of the most recognisable players in the world with his fuzzy red hair.

WORLD CUP STARS ... ABSW PREDICTS

With the World Cup coming very soon here are some of the players ABSW expects to star in the World Cup.

They might not be huge world stars at this stage, but after France 98, well, who knows....

Top left is Ariel Ortega, recently described as the 'next Maradona'. Bottom left is Abel Balbo, currently playing in the Serie A and a regular Argentine national team player.

Tino Asprilla (Colombia) is top right, one time team-mate of Alan Shearer, and below him is Hernon Crespo.

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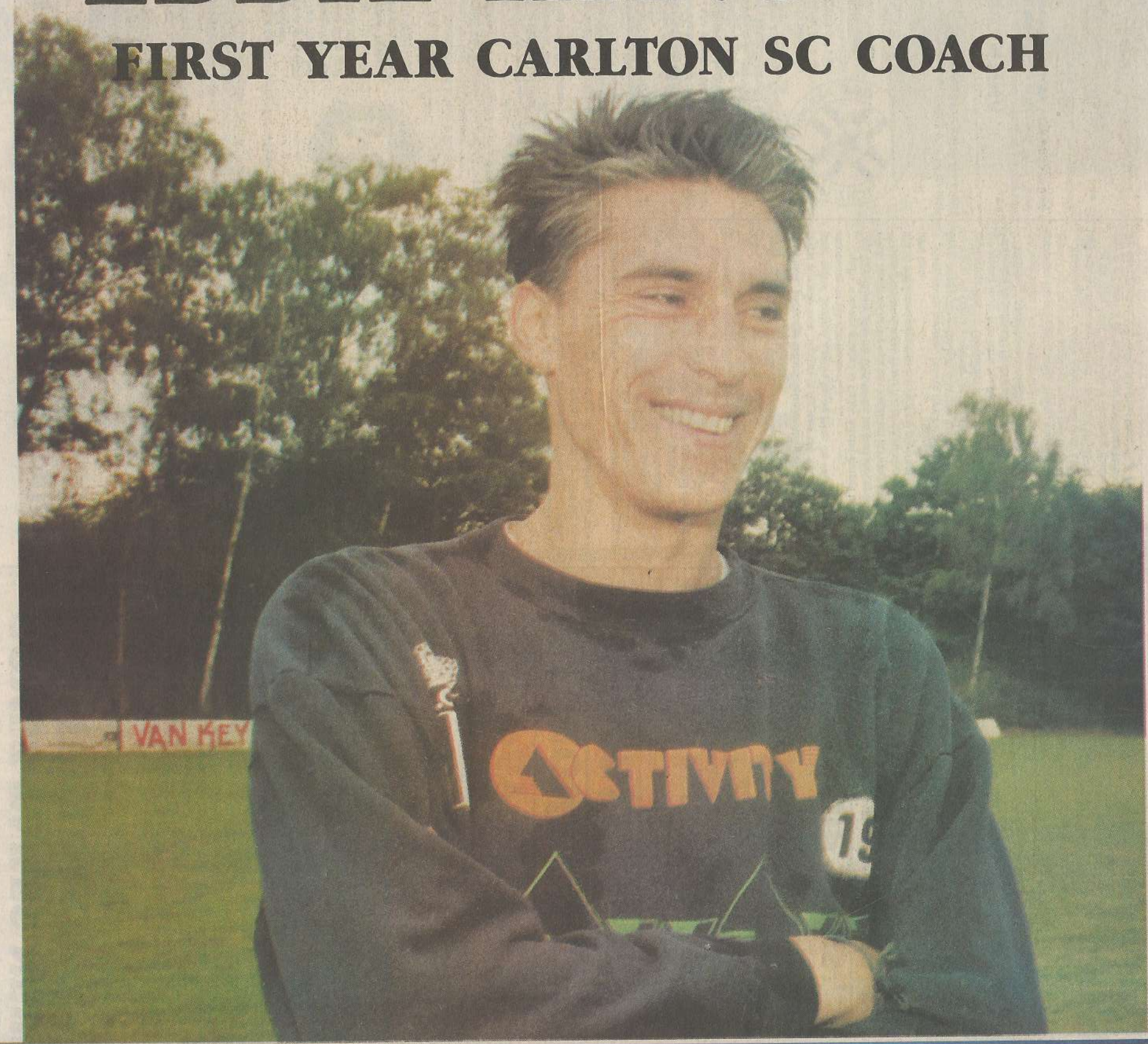
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